2003

Eccleſia Enucleata:

The Temple Opened:

Or, A Clear

DEMONSTRATION

Of the True

Goſpel-Church

IN ITS

Nature and Conſtitution,

According to the

DOCTRINE and PRACTICE

OF

Chriſt and his Apoſtles.

By *I. C.*

In that day ſeven Women ſhall take hold of one man, ſaying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own Apparel; only let us be called by thy Name, to take away our Reproach: Iſa. 4. 1.

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

Candid Reader,

TRue Religion, and the Church of Christ, are Twins; they were conceived and born together, and have grown up together in the World; and I may say of them, as of all the Sons of God in particular, That they are born, not of Blood, nor of the will of the Flesh, nor of the will of Man, but of God: *John* 1. 13. They are only from God, and for God, and his revealed mind and will. In his Word is the great

preſcribing Rule of both, and the only Touch-ſtone for an unerring Tryal of the Truth of either. All Pretentions of humane Wiſdom, Law, and Authority, muſt here vail their Bonnet; for if theſe could juſtly claim a binding Power in matters of this Nature, I know no Reaſon why the Great Turk *hath not as ſtrong Arguments for his Religion in all his Dominions, as Chriſtians have any where for theirs; We find (whatever Prerogative Secular Powers lay claim to) that they are fully aſſured that Religion never takes place upon mens minds by their Authority only, they muſt pretend to at leaſt a Divine, as we ſee. The* Turk *muſt have his falſe Prophet* Mahomet, *and his* Mufti; *and the Ten-horned*

ed ſecular Beaſt muſt have his two-horned Eccleſiaſtical Brute. So the Heathen Kingdoms and Pagan, have always had their Diabolick Prieſts, to influence the Minds, and ſham the Conſciences of Men, by the awe of ſome Divinity, or ſuppoſed Divine Authority, into a Reverend eſteem of that Religion they deſigned to eſtabliſh, ſuitable to their own carnal deſigns and advantages.

Since the knowledge of the True God, and the breaking forth of the light of the Goſpel in the Kingdoms of the darkneſs of this world, the Devills Mask hath been much removed, he is found to be what he is: His wiles and deceits, whereby he hath ſo long impoſed upon the minds of men, are very much diſcovered, in ſo much

that it may be ſaid of him in theſe latter days, that he is fallen as lightning from heaven, *ſince the Reforming Angels mentioned* Rev. 14. *have been employed in the Wilderneſs, the three Goſpel flying Angels to bring in that glorious light, and the two Sicle Angels that cut down the Harveſt and Vintage, the Thickets and ſhading poyſonſome Antichriſtian Trees have been in a great meaſure in many places cut down; yea Reformation hath been carried on to ſuch degrees, that* the Angels have been ſeen, having the ſeven laſt Plagues, and thoſe that have got the Victory over the Beaſt, over his Image, and over his Mark, and over the number of his name, ſtanding on the Sea of Glaſs, having

ving the Harps of God, and singing the Song of *Moses* the Servant of God, and the Song of the Lamb, *&c.* Yea, the Temple of the Tabernacle of the Testimony hath been open: *and I doubt not but the seven Vial-Angels are coming out of the Temple, though Smoak fill it at present, from the* glory of God, and his power. *In answer to the old enquiry, Where was your Church* (according to Article 19. of the Church of *England*) *before* Luther? *We say, It hath been for above* 1200 *years in the Wilderness; it was before that, ever since the Apostles times, under the* Draconick *Tyranny and Persecution, till it fell under the Beast and False Prophet, in the midst of Spiritual* Egypt, Sodom

and Babylon, *out of which it hath been bringing under the conduct of the Angel that was with the Church in the Wilderneſs; by ſeveral removes, ſteps and degrees of Reformation, ſometimes too wofully luſting and turning back again.* But God will be a Refiners Fire to all the Sons of *Levi*, he will throughly purge away all the Churches droſs, and take away all her Tin; he will waſh away the Filth of the Daughters of *Zion*, and purge the Blood of *Jeruſalem* from the midſt thereof, by the Spirit of Judgment, and Spirit of Burning; *by his trying Providences, and bright ſhining ſearching Light of the Goſpel. In order to the laſt, I have preſumed to caſt in ſome fire from the Altar,*

ltar, have run to and fro a little,
hat knowledge may encreaſe, and
hat many may be purified and made
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t, but lend thy Light alſo, as thou
aſt received from the Lord Jeſus
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ght offerd, then that the Croſs attends
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e Croſs and Truth, *and follow*
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le while; take heed of b ggling
th Conſcience, and ſophiſticating
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to make it ſerve thy own corrupt de
ſigns and ends; the Word of God
pure and conſonant to it ſelf: Chri
is, and will make it manifeſt and co
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ſition, that he is the only Lawgiver to
his Church; he ſeeks ſuch Wo
ſhippers as ſhall ſerve him i
Spirit and in Truth: *he hates a*
abhors all Whoriſh Babyloniſh Dre
ſes of his Worſhip and Ordinanc
Let Chriſt be found and embrace
his Church ſought out in the place
the Wilderneſs where it hath be
nouriſhed: Get true Union to Chri
the Head, becoming a Member of
Myſtical Body, and maintain th
Goſpel-communion of Saints,
none can harm you.

The noiſe that ſome men make

de*e World of Schiſm and Separation,*
d *nothing but ſome of Antichriſts*
bri*ſt, that he throws into the eyes of*
co*oſe that he cannot quite blind; for*
pp*ere was never any Schiſm in the*
er *yſtical Body of Chriſt, his Veſture*
Vo*as never divided, and there was ne-*
n *r any true conſtituted Goſpel-Church*
s a*t by Separation; and as for Schiſm,*
Dr*it concerns Viſible Churches, there*
anc*none ſpoken of in the New Teſta-*
ace*nt, but ſuch as was found in a*
tce *rticular Congregational Church, and*
hey but ſuperficial Diviſions that
Chr*re ſoon healed. He that walks in*
of *e bond of peaceable communion with*
n t*particular Goſpel-Church of Chriſt,*
, *ll never be hurt by all the Nick-*
mes of Schiſmatick or Dividing-
ake *paratiſt, that any of the Worſhip-*

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pers of the Beaſt or his Image, or o
any carrying the mark or number o
his name, can caſt upon him. It's a
eaſy thing for men of corrupt minds t
call what they pleaſe by the name
Church, and then to ſtigmatize th
Servants of Chriſt in not holdin
communion with it, by all reproachf
names of the Devils invention: It
the greateſt intereſt of every true Fo
lower of Chriſt, to count the coſt of h
Profeſſion, and reſolve that he muſt
through good report and evil, *a*
muſt take a ſhare in the Sufferings
Chriſt, who is now crowned wi
Glory and Honour, *as all his Fait*
ful Members ſhall be, for he hath ſa
that where he is, they ſhall
alſo: *and doubtleſs there is* a rewa
for the Righteous, there is a G
th

at Judgeth in the Earth. And
is is the Faith and Patience
the Saints, *and of him who ſhall*
eem it honour enough to be found
e of the leaſt, and am,

Thy Servant for
Chriſts ſake

I. C.

The

The Contents of th Chapters containe in this Treatiſe.

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ERRATA

The Reader is desired (before he read the Book) to Correct the following Errata's.

PAge 24. line 21. after *Ceremonies*, add *at.*
line 22. after *Antitype*, add *were.*
Page 31. l. 2. read *destined to.*
Page 37. l. 25. for *jugeled*, read *juggled.*
Page 39. l. 11. for גוים read גויים
Page 41. l. 3. after *that*, add *though.*
Page 50. l. 15. for *munching* read *mouching.*
Page 72. l. 21. after *only*, read *of.*
Page 78. l. 23. after *Churches*, add *of Judea.*
Page 91. l. 14. for χειροθουθεὶς, read χειροθονηθεὶς.
Page 96. l. 24. for *who they*, read *they who.*
Page 100. l. 4. blot out *and.*
Page 106. l. 4. blot out *in.*
Page 120. l. 14. after *one Body*, add *so also is Christ*
Page 125. l. 23. for ἀγάπε, read ἀγάπη.
Page 126. l. 12. for ἐνεργείνα, read ἐνεργείαν.
Page 141. l. 3. for *parterition*, read *preterition.*
Page 142. after *Christ*, add *into.*

T H

THE TEMPLE OPENED:

OR A Clear Demonſtration OF THE TRUE *GOSPEL-CHURCH.*

CHAP. I.

The Deſign of this Undertaking.

AS the true Church of Chriſt is the moſt glorious Fabrick that ever God created; in the faſhioning of which, his infinite Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs and Truth did moſt tranſcendently appear, and wherein he hath and will magnify all his glori-

ous Attributes, and his Son Christ Jesus the Image of the Fathers Person, above what he hath done in any the Artifice of the Old Creation: Shew there is no one thing in the world that Satan and his Instruments have levyed their Counsels, Power, and Malice more at, since the first appearance of it in the World. But seeing he could never prevail by all the powers of Hell to destroy it, hath managed and carryed on his design principally for the darkning, clouding, and obscuring the Glorious of it; and finding the unbelieving world began to have their Eyes opened, and to behold the Glory of Christ and his glorious Body the Church; He provides a Fob Christ and Sham-Church, which he set them the world on wondering after. And when by the light of the Gospel breaking forth with greater brightness, that spiritual *Egyptian* darkness which had over-spread the *Europe*an

Hemisphere

hemiſphere, began to vaniſh, & that Pe church was diſcovered to be a Sy- n agogue of Satan, and a Diabolical : heat, by her Heatheniſh Idolatries, or piritual Whoredoms, and whoriſh na ttire; the grand Deceiver betook an imſelf to new meaſures, and con- a ived ways and methods for con- B ounding and darkning the minds y of men, that upon the dawning of , oſpel light were ſtudiouſly intent n pon a Reformation. And among in her Bombs of Helliſh Mixture that lo e flung in and brake among them, vi r the diſtracting and dividing es em in this great Undertaking, y is was not the leaſt, To confound t eir Language. Fain they would n r the moſt part have Extricated t emſelves from the Antichriſtian A abyrinth; and found the way by ſp e Clue of Gods word through that gl hymerian Monkiſh darkneſs, in ne atters of Doctrine, and arrived at pe great a clearneſs and full Under- er

ſtanding of the moſt weighty and neceſſary Points for Life and Salvation, and were ſo abundantly ſatisfied in what they believed, and profeſſed, in Oppoſition to all the Romiſh Lyes and Hypocriſies, that Triumphing in their cauſe, *they loved not their Lives unto Death*; and having weather'd this Cape of good hope even through a Sea of blood, and many a Hurricane of ſmart Perſecutions: They began anon to be becalmed, juſt as they ſhould have Entred the Haven of a full Reformation: For falling now under the the Countenance and Favour of Proteſtant Princes, they found not only that eaſe and reſt from Perſecution was very delightful; and that ſeeing they were ſafe, through the Faith and Patience of their Predeceſſors, as to the main points of Salvation, they thought it not adviſable to run any further adventure in matters, as they thought, of

leſſer

leſſer moment: Seeing the paſſage was alſo Hazardous in reſpect of worldly Pomp and Intereſt; finding that if they went ſo far as the humility, plaineſs and ſimplicity of the Goſpel in the worſhip of Chriſt, they muſt lay aſide all that gawdy dreſs of Church Dignities and Ceremonies which the Curtizan of *Rome* had bedaubed it with; and hence, becauſe the *Love of Money is the Root of all Evil*, they came to treat with her for the *Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs*; and it was agreed that the Reformed Religion in all matters of worſhip, ſhould for the moſt part appear in the Romiſh dreſs & attire, & ſhould be accompanyed with the like Profit, Honours & Pleaſures, that ſo the honeſt woman might not be diſtinguiſhed from the whore by the Dreſs, and this expos'd in the ſtreet. And now I ſay, behold Satans great Subtilty; when he hath obtained thus much, that

theſe two Ladies walk up and down in one faſhion, he calls them both by one Name; ſo that now men begin to queſtion their difference, and ſuſpect they are related to each other, as *Aholah* and *Aholibah*; and many finding the Reformed Church ſo like unto the *Romiſh*, they doubt whether there be any ſuch thing as a true Church of Chriſt on Earth; and ſeeing ſo many women play the whore, do queſtion whether there is any honeſt woman living: But *many run to and fro, and knowledge increaſing*, ſome tell us, and confidently affirm, they have found this Church of Chriſt; and that all this while it hath been in the Antichriſtian Wilderneſs: And others entring into it, ſay, Surely it is ſo; there is much of the Sweetneſs of Chriſts Love, and conſolations of the Spirit: But yet there are many things dark and obſcure, and ſo will be, until ſuch time as this *Babyloniſh* cheat be

be perfectly diſcovered to the minds of men, and that whole fabrick deſtroyed.

Among all the Miſts and Foggs that this Miſtreſs of Sorceries hath raiſed to loſe the true Spouſe of Chriſt in it, there's not many hath been greater then the confuſion of Languages, and eſpecially about the word *Church* and *Schiſm*, that all Enquirers ſpake of the Church, but no two meant the ſame thing; men generally agreed there *was a Church, and a true one*; (excluding *Rome*) but could not tell what a kind of thing it ſhould be; and great contentions have been and are to this day about it. Some ſay, Here is the Church; and others, that it is there; and every one cries up his Church, and calls others Schiſmaticks; and they that get power into their hands, deal with others as ſuch.

Now it would be worth our while to ſearch after many (who

have found) for confirmation of those that will be perſwaded of the Truth, and to examine every Church that pretends to that Name, by the Teſt of the Goſpel, that we may be fully reſolved what metal each is made of. I know all Chriſtians of what mould or ſize whatever, do pretend to lay no *other Foundation then Jeſus Chriſt:* and its well if it were true of all profeſſing themſelves Proteſtants; for that *Foundadation is a Rock*, and they are ſo far wiſe that lay Chriſt as ſuch in their writings and doctrine; but yet that will not bear an ill Superſtructure: as a good one will not long ſtand on a bad foundation, ſo a good foundation will not long bear up an ill Superſtructure, 1 *Cor.* 3. 11, 12. *Other Foundation can no man lay then that is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt. Now if any man build upon this Foundation, Gold, Silver, Precious-ſtones, Wood, Hay, Stubble; Every mans work*

work ſhall be manifeſt, for the day ſhall declare it, becauſe it ſhall be revealed by fire, and the fire ſhall try every mans work of what ſort it is, verſe 14. *If any mans work abide which he hath built thereupon, he ſhall receive a reward,* verſe 15. *If any mans work ſhall be burnt, he ſhall ſuffer loſs, but he himſelf ſhall be ſaved,* [provided he lay a good foundation] *yet ſo as by fire*; I doubt not but many good mens and Miniſters Church-works will be burnt, and they will ſuffer loſs; it will be manifeſt one day to be the great blemiſh of the *Reformation*, that ſo many good men that have Preached Chriſt clearly as to his Sonſhip, Natures, Offices, Merits and Satisfaction for Juſtification and Sanctification, have from intereſt, prejudice or ignorance, extreamly fumbled in moſt of the concerns of his Goſpel-Church. I have much admired to hear ſome mens Pulpit-

zeal

zeal againſt ſin in general, and for the advancement of holineſs, even to a juſtifying condition; and when we come to enquire of the particular caſes for the practice of it in Goſpel and revealed Religion, in duties toward God, they can tell you of nothing but moral natural Religion, and reduce all the Service of God under the Goſpel thereto; ſaying they have no other Rule to direct us there, but ſuch as this, *Let every ſoul be ſubject to the Higher Powers*, *Rom.* 13. 1. So as for revealed Religion under the Goſpel, our judgments and practice muſt be wholly regulated by, and reſolved into the wills, laws and commands of men.

But to come to the matter we intend, ſeeing the word *Church* is cloathed with ſo great ambiguity, and ſo much duſt raiſed about it, to the perplexing of mens minds and Conſciences, we ſhall principally fix

fix our Enquiries for the true ſence and notion of the word upon the tenure of the Goſpel, and the meaning of the Spirit of God there; knowing that it is That hath the greateſt power upon the Conſciences of men, when it comes with evidence and demonſtration, to convince us of Truth; and whereas fire and ſword, yea mens great words and looks, may terrify fleſh and blood: yea Pulpit Thunder-Claps, diſcharged on the behalf of Error and Nonſenſe, do keep many weak judgments and conſciences in bondage and thraldom, affrighting them from an impartial ſearch for truth, by hard names, equivocating words, paſſionate and zealous ways of expreſſion; yet a Conſcience truly enlightened by Divine Teſtimony is very little concern'd at ſuch things, any more than to pity ſuch paſſionate Soul-confounding blind guides, and much more their poor deluded enſlaved Followers.

I ſhall handle this word *Church* two ways, for our more diſtinct underſtanding its true Goſpel meaning.

1. Shew in what ſence it is not uſually taken.

2. In what ſence it is,

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Shewing that a place of Meeting is no where taken in the New Teſtament for a Church of Chriſt.

IT's neceſſary to intimate concerning the word ἐκκλησία in General, that tho' it be taken for a Congregation or Aſſembly of people, yet it's not alwayes limited to a religious one, but is uſed by Claſſick Authors, for any Aſſembly; prophane, civil or religious; and ſo it's uſed expreſly, *Acts* 19. for a prophane and *tumultuous aſſembly*, ἐκκλησία συγκεχυμένη and for a *civil lawful Court or Aſſembly*, *ver.* 39. ἐν τῇ ἐννόμῳ ἐκκλησίᾳ the firſt of which was diſmiſſed *ver.* 40. But in the proper and uſual ſence of the Spirit of God in the New Teſtament, it's every where, except in the place

place above mentioned, taken for a Church of Christ in one sence or another; and therefore that we may be assured in what sences it is understood, it's necessary to winnow the Chaff from the Wheat, and set aside such things as through the mistakes of men, error, custom and carnal interest, are usually called so, and imposed as such upon erring or unthinking judgments, when Christ and his Gospel never called them so.

First there is nothing more frequent among us, then to call a *place of meeting for Publick-Worship, a Church:* I affirm there is no just reason of understanding it so in the New Testament, no not in a Metonymy-sence: though Learned Mr. *Joseph Mede* takes a great deal of pains to prove that the word ἐκκλησία [1 *Cor.* 11. 22. *Have ye not houses to eat and drink in, but despise you the Church of God?*] is there to be understood for the material place of

of ordinary aſſembling together for the Worſhip of God, and ſaith, that their Oratories where they frequently met, were called Churches; and yet in the begining of his diſcourſe he ſaith, *It is taken for granted in a manner by the moſt of our Reformed Writers, and affirmed by ſome of the other ſide, that in the Apoſtles times, and ages next after them; (whilſt the Church lived under Pagan and Perſecuting Emperours) Chriſtians had no Oratories or places ſet apart for Divine Worſhip; but that they aſſembled here and there promiſcuouſly and uncertainly, as they pleaſed, or the occaſion ſerved, in places of common uſe, and not otherwiſe*; which thing undoubtedly is juſtly enough (and upon grounds more evident) believed, then any reaſons brought to prove the contrary by that worthy perſon, wherein he acknowledgeth himſelf almoſt ſingular in this undertaking, and lays his firſt and great-

greateſt ſtreſs on that expreſſion, 1 *Cor.* 11.22. *Here* (ſaith he) *I take the word* ἐκκλησία *or Church, to note not the Aſſembly, but the place appointed for ſacred duties, and that from the oppoſition thereof to* οἰκίαι, *their own houſes; theſe are places proper for common and ordinary repaſt, and not the Church or houſe of God.* This is the only argument which he brings, beſides ſome obſcure paſſages of ſome Fathers whoſe opinions will not ſway here, but as in other things, ſo far as we ſee them conſonant to the truth, manifeſt in Scriptures, compared together; and it ſeems ſtrange that the word ſhould have a tropical meaning in this place, and every where elſe a proper one: and beſides, the reaſon from the oppoſition will not hold, eſpecially if we conſider what Mr. *Mede* underſtands thoſe Oratories or Churches of theirs to be. *It is not to be imagined that in the firſt three hundred*

dred years before Conſtantines *time, that they were ſuch goodly and ſtately ſtructures as the Church had after the Empire became Chriſtian — At the firſt ſome capable and convenient Room within the walls or dwelling of ſome pious Diſciple, dedicated by the religious bounty of the owner, to the uſe of the Church, and that uſually an* ἀνώγεον ὑπερῶον *upper room, or Cœnaculum*; It's very probable that all the Diſciples houſes were at the ſervice of the Churches; but that any one houſe (or room in a houſe) was dedicated ſo to that religious uſe, as to be ſeparated for it from common uſes when the *Church* met not, is not probable at all: for in times and places of Perſecution, if Churches meet in any certain houſe or place, though in a private houſe, they ſhall be ſure to be interrupted and broken in upon by Perſecuting Officers and Informers. The only place met in for ſome time conſiderable,

that we read of, was *Pauls* own hired houſe at *Rome*; but we find not that it was conſecrated or called a Church. I am ſure conſecrated Barns, Garrets, Cellars, or Dining Rooms, would be eſteemed by our devout Eccleſiaſticks a great Abomination.

But how will the Oppoſition hold, if the Room called the Church, was in the ſame houſe they eat and drank ordinarily in? He ſhould have rather ſaid, Have ye not Kitchens or Parlours of common uſe to eat and drink in, but you muſt deſpiſe or put a Prophanation on the Garret, which is the Church of God? Beſides, if that Addition had not been made to the Church, I ſhould much rather have enclined to Mr. *Mides* ſence, if he had ſaid only, deſpiſe ye the Church? But I take it, that it would be a very audacious and highly abuſive Expreſſion, to ſay, That a Meeting-houſe is a

Church

Church of God, or a Church of Christ: And why is not the Oppoſition as full thus? *Have you not houſes to eat and drink in, or Families* [for ſo the word is uſed] *But you muſt do it in the Church-Aſſemblies?* for they made their Love-feaſts in their Aſſemblies. It is evident enough that the Apoſtle takes Ἐκκλησίαι for the Aſſembling of the Church together, as *verſ.* 18. where its uſed: when you meet together in Aſſembly, (*i.e.* when you are Congregated together) I hear that there have been Diviſions (or Schiſms) among you, and thoſe he means had the Diviſions, who were the Church, for the Goſpel aſcribes culpable Schiſmes no where, but to Body Politicks, or Aſſemblies, not to Houſes. But if we grant Mr. *Mede* all that he ſo induſtriouſly labours to ſqueeze out of the Text, only to favour the Relative Holineſs of ſuch places; its not to be ſuppoſed that he intended

that they were real and proper Churches, but only Metonymical Churches, by a Trope, and improperly ſo named; no otherwiſe allowable names; putting the *Continens pro contento*, to diſtinguiſh places allotted to convenient aſſembling in Religious Worſhip, from Town-halls, and other houſes of meeting together for publick concerns, or more private Society and Converſation. And ſo we loſe nothing by it, if ſuch a place be called improperly a Church, its not the Church of Chriſt intended in the Goſpel which Chriſt purchaſed with his blood; nor built of living ſtones, nor ſuch as Chriſt is the Head of; nor ſuch as *Paul* wrote his Epiſtles too; nor the Church of *Corinth*, which he exhorts, rebukes, and commends in the Epiſtles that he wrote: And therefore we may with the greateſt aſſurance conclude, that no place where Religi-

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ous Aſſemblies frequently uſe to be, is a Church of Chriſt; or may properly be ſo called.

They that plead the Expreſſion in the *Epheſian Town-Clerks*, Speech, [Act. 19. 37. *Ye have brought hither theſe which are neither Robbers of Churches.*] Shew their little skill in the Original Text, the word is, ἱεροσύλους Robbers of Temples, ſuch as were dedicated to the Heathen Gods and Godeſſes, to which they aſcribed not only Relative, but inherent Holineſs; and therefore adapted that name to them.

CHAP. III.

Of a National and Provincial CHURCH.

CHriſt never inſtituted any ſuch Church under the Goſpel Adminiſtration, as a National and Provincial, or Dioceſan: there is as much for one as for the other, there's no ſeeming pretence can be made for any of them, from any Goſpel Expreſſion: when I ſay this, I mean not a Church in a Nation, Province or Dioceſs, nor all the particular Churches in ſuch place, collectively and co-ordinately conſidered. But I mean in the uſual acceptation of ſuch Churches in our day, as of *France*, of *Spain*, of *Denmark*, *&c.* and in the ſence that a National

National Church was taken in under the Old Teſtament, *viz.* an Organized National, Provincial, or Dioceſan Church, that have Officers or Members ſuited to their reſpective Natures and Conſtitution, as Paſtors, and other Officers, Exerciſing National, Provincial, or Dioceſan Juriſdiction in Eccleſiaſtical Courts, or elſewhere; and Members, *quatenus* Natives of ſuch places, being therefore ſaid to be born within the Pale of the Church, or by vertue of ſuch Nativity have immediate right to baptiſm, and made ſo.

I ſay, that that word Ἐκκλησία no where ſignifies ſuch a Church in the New Teſtament, except when there is mention made of the Church of the *Jews*, and the word is but once uſed in Application to them, Act. 7. 38. *This was he who was in the Church in the Wilderneſs*; this we own was a National

Church: but elſewhere in the New Teſtament, I know not of one place where ἐκκλησία can with any fair pretence be underſtood of a National Church.

Beſides it may be argued from undeniable reaſons, that Chriſt inſtituted or intended not ſuch a Church for the days of the Goſpel.

If it be duely weighed, that Chriſt by his Death put a full Period to the whole *Jewiſh* Oeconomy, Nationality being the form of its conſtitution; Having Officers, Members, Aſſemblies and Ordinances ſuited to its Nature. The *Aaronick* Prieſthood was National, a Type of Chriſts Prieſthood, relating to his univerſal Church; this Prieſthood with all the appertaining Sacrifices, Ordinances, Ceremonies, the Manifeſtation of the Antitype aboliſhed; yea that kind of Church Memberſhip was utterly aboliſhed, (*viz.* that none could be a Member

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of that Church but a *Few* born, or one Proſelyted to that Nation) it being the only Nation in the Earth that God had choſen, with Excluſion of all other, till Chriſt came and brake down the *Partition-Wall* between *Few* and *Gentile*, after which no man was any longer to be reckoned ever the more a Church-member, becauſe he was a Native of this or that Country; *Col.* 3. 11 But in the conforming to Chriſts likeneſs, *There is neither Greek nor Few, Circumciſion nor Uncircumciſion, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond or Free; but Chriſt is all in all:* and therefore of whatever Nation a man be of, if he believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt he ſhall be ſaved, and becomes a capable Member of the viſible Church; and where-ever he is born, without Faith in Chriſt, he cannot be ſaved; neither is without a viſible credible Profeſſion thereof, capable of communion with

with the Viſible Church in all Ordinances.

Moreover Chriſt Jeſus aboliſhed all the National Church Aſſemblies and Ordinances; for the *Jews* as they were one Organized Church, ſo they were to be but one Congregation; (which is not known now of any one Nation) aſſembling together for the Worſhip of God in one place, where their Ark of the Covenant was, and therefore the Tabernacle of Publick Worſhip was called the Tabernacle of the Congregation; *where all the Males were required to appear before the Lord thrice a year*, Exod. 14. 23, 24. whereby they ſhewed themſelves aſſembled and a Congregated Nation, all in actual communion in the ſame Church-Adminiſtrations, and in one place, all which was duly to be obſerved during the time of the Tabernacle and ſtanding of the Temple; and though they corruptly

corruptly retained their high places for offering ſome Sacrifices during moſt of that time, till the full Reformation in *Hezekiahs* and *Joſiahs* days; yet the Lord ſtill charged it on them as their great ſin, and witneſſed againſt it by his Meſſengers the Prophets as ſuch. And though they had their ſeveral Synagogues, they were but for reading of the Law, not for Sacrifice or Burnt-offering, which were National Services, and were to be diſpenſed only at the Tabernacle of the Congregation, or at the Temple; yea, all Sacrifices & Expiations, Purifications, *&c.* appertaining to particular Levitical Uncleanneſſes, or moral tranſgreſſions, were there to be performed.

Now our Lord Jeſus Chriſt never erected ſuch a Goſpel-worſhip after this was aboliſhed, either for matter or form; neither a National Congregation, nor a National Paſtor;

Paſtor, as *Aaron*; nor Ordinances adapted to a National communion, as the Sacrifices of old were, he never intended in this way or manner to edify his Goſpel-Church.

Beſides, As Chriſt eſtabliſhed the Church of the Goſpel, it was not capable of ſuch a conſtitution, ſuch being impoſſible to be ſuſtained without the countenance, if not the compulſive power of civil powers; and we ſee that *de facto* it came into the ruines, when ever in the *Jewiſh* Nation, Wicked Kings ſwayed the Scepter; we well enough are aſſured that our Saviour and his Apoſtles formed the Goſpel-Churches every where under Heathen Princes and Governours, who were for the moſt part ſevere Perſecutors of them, witneſs their Sufferings in the Apoſtles days, and during the Chriſtians bloody Perſecutions, till *Conſtantines* time, for 300 years, at which time of proſperi-

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ty, this National or then rather Provincial corrupt grandeur of Church-conſtitution began to enter, proceeding from the corrupted minds of Church Officers, aſpiring to the accumulation of riches & honours. Soon after they fell under the *Arrian* Hereſy, under which the ſame Church pomp continued, and proceeded to grow with much Perſecution, and confuſion, and diſtraction in the world; with the daily increaſe of all manner of corruptions in doctrine and worſhip, even to the introduction of Heatheniſh Abominations in the worſhip of God, till the mortal wound was given to one of the ſeven heads of the *Romiſh* Empire, and was healed by the eighth, which was the falſe Prophet the Grand Church Impoſter; under which the great Apoſtacy hath ſo manifeſtly prevailed, and during whoſe Uſurpation the true Church of Chriſt hath been in

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the Wilderneſs, and the Witneſſes Propheſying in Sackcloth. So that our Bleſſed Lord and Saviour ſeeing the preſent ſtate of his little Flock when he aſcended, and foreſeeing their future Suffering State for ſo many Ages to come, under *Rome Heathen*, and after pretendedly Chriſtian, conſtituted ſuch a frame of Goſpel churches, that were capable of being Spiritual Polities under Heathen and Antichriſtian Princes and Governours, and fitted Officers and Ordinances for their communion and edification ſuited to ſuch a ſtate; which conſtitution was to laſt by his commiſſion to the end of the world, not alterable to another kind by the will of man in the enſuing proſperous eſtate that the Church might be bleſſed withal in after ages; (which hath been very rare hitherto) nor much to be prejudiced as to its truly intended Oeconomy by the

the afflictions and ſufferings that it was deſtined by faith and patience to encounter withal.

Hence it will appear, there being a Politick Impoſſibility, that the Church-conſtitution Eſtabliſhed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles, could be National, becauſe of the Power of the Dragon raging ſo much againſt it in Governours, and Rulers of the Earth; during the time of the firſt Ages of it, and afterward for the moſt part, by reaſon of the Tyranny and Uſurpation of the falſe Prophet. And when that any time in any Nations, it was favoured with the countenance of Chriſtian Kings and Princes, had it been National, it muſt have been ſubject to all the Alterations, Additions, and Diminutions in Form and Worſhip, which the corrupt and changeable minds of men in Power would invent and impoſe, eſpecially upon change of Governours and Governments,

ments, though Chriſtian, yet divers in their Tempers, Underſtandings, and Opinions concerning Gods true Worſhip, as alſo, in their Intereſts and carriages towards the Church, that it would be the moſt difficult thing in the World to have known the manner *and Faſhion of Chriſts houſe.* Wherefore (the Apoſtle ſaith, Heb. 3. 1.) *Holy Brethren, Partakers of the Heavenly calling, Conſider the Apoſtle and High Prieſt of our Profeſſion, Chriſt Jeſus*; verſ. 2. *Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as alſo Moſes was faithful in all his houſe,* [*i. e.* in all things appertaining to the Worſhip of God in his Church,] verſ. 3. *For this man was counted worthy of more Glory then Moſes, in as much as he who builded the houſe, hath more Honour then the houſe*; verſ. 5. *Moſes verily was faithful in all his houſe as a Servant, for a Teſtimony of thoſe things that were to be ſpoken after*;

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verſ. 6. *But Chriſt as a Son over his own houſe,* [*in which he is a chief corner ſtone, and hath a greater Propriety then* Moſes *had upon all reſpects*] *whoſe houſe are we, &c.* i. e. The faithful in the times of the Goſpel are the houſe and Church of Chriſt, and not this or that Nation or Province, lying continually at the mercy and diſpoſitions of the wills of Princes, guided by carnal intereſts, and acted by corrupt minds, to the modelling of it, by mutable Laws, as they ſhall correſpond moſt with their State-deſigns and purpoſes, which had been a great ground to have ſuſpected the faithfulneſs of Chriſt, if he had left his Church under ſuch a *Proteus*-like form and conſtitution, as to be lyable to all the models, changes and alterations of future ages, that the powers of the world would form them into; under a pretence of profeſſion of Chriſtianity, when

as very few of them, if they were duely weighed in the ballance of the Sanctuary, will prove to be much more then almoſt Chriſtians.

Laſtly, The purpoſe and deſign of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by his Incarnation, Sufferings, Miracles wrought, and Doctrine Preached by himſelf and Apoſtles, was the gathering both Jews and Gentiles Elect into one Body, his Church, where-ever ſcattered or diſperſed, not reſpecting one Nation or people more then another, any further then in reſpect of the Elect Ones among them, nor deſigning any Kingdom as yet in this world with External Pomp and Grandeur, but rather a continuation of a Suffering State, with very little intermiſſion, under the powers of the Earth, exerciſing the rage and cruelty of the Dragon againſt the Church; and afterward the Tyranny and Uſurpation of the *Seven Headed Romiſh*

Beaſt

Beast and False Prophet; neither designed he the *calling of many wise men after the Flesh, not many mighty, not many noble*, 1 Cor. 1. 26. otherwise then which he would certainly have done, had he designed National & Provincial Churches; he would have said, I design a Church that may top, at least give check to earthly Kings & Princes; I will turn their heart & make them mine, both they, and their Subjects: Therefore I will call *many wise men after the Flesh, many mighty and many noble persons*, who shall rule, manage, and defend my Church, which may be in after-ages, but we see it quite contrary yet. Ver. 27. *God hath chosen the foolish things of this world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of this world, to confound the things that are mighty, and base things of this world, and things that are despis'd*, to cary on his spiritual rule. Believe it this matter

cannot conſtitute a National Church it muſt be another ſort of men. Whatever men therefore may confidently aſſert, and however they make a boaſt, and vaunt themſelves of National Churches, Officers, Members, yea, and National Juriſdiction and Judicature, exerted in Spiritual Courts, ſo called, none of which were of Chriſt's Appointment and Inſtitution; but were the meer products of Humane Policies, and meer *Antichriſtian Shams* put upon the poor carnal blind world, whereby that Wicked One endeavours to carry away the eyes and hearts of the children of men from the true, plain and Spiritual Spouſe of Chriſt; and go a whoring after Harlots that are agreeable to the faſhions of this world, in Pride, Pomp, Pleaſures, Covetouſneſs, *&c.*

And I ſay, though ſuch Eccleſiaſtical Powers, as alſo *Civil*, may deal very hardly upon this account with

with the true *Followers of the Lamb*, and *Deluding Pulpiteers* may terrify and fright ſome more weak and leſs *grounded Chriſtians*, with ambiguous words, miſ-interpretation and falſe application of the Scriptures of Truth; *calling light darkneſs, and darkneſs light*; calling what they pleaſe, Church, Charity, Communion, Uniformity, Schiſm, Separation, Rebellion, Diſobedience to Laws, Governments, *&c.* Yet through the *mercy of the moſt High*, there are ſome that have *bought the Truth* in theſe latter dayes of light at dear rates of Sufferings, with expence of Eſtates, Liberties and Lives under the Antichriſtian Tyranny, and taſted ſo much of the ſweetneſs and excellency of it, that *they* will not ſell it, ſo as to part with it for worldly intereſt, or be affrighted from it, by the open mouths of Roaring Lyons, nor jugaled out of it by the Sham-Di-

vinity of the ſlie Foxes that ſpoil the Vines.

We have nothing to ſay to ſuch men, but as *Hannah* ſpake, 1 *Sam.* 2. 3. *Talk no more ſo proudly, let not arrogancy come out of your mouth, for the Lord is a God of Knowledge, and by him Actions are weighed.* And as for ſome good old *Ely*'s who are too much blinded with prejudice, paſſion and intereſt, keep a great ſputter againſt Schiſm, Separation from the Church, *&c.* and do not ſeldom grieve the hearts of Chriſts Members, by their unwarrantable doctrines and practices in the great concerns of Gods Worſhip, and but gently rebuke *Hophni* and *Phineas*, we are very well aſſured, that however they may have laid a a good foundation in ſome people, yet their ſuperſtructure is but hay and rubbiſh, which ſhall certainly be burnt, *and the day ſhall make it manifeſt* what it is.

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The only Plea that is made for a National Church, that is worth our Obſervation, is from the Propheſies of Old, of *calling in the Nations, Sprinkling many Nations, &c.* Iſa. 5. 26. chap. 52. 15. chap. 45. 1.

This Argument hath little in it to prove a Goſpel National Church, for theſe and ſuch like Propheſies, reſer to the calling of the *Gentiles*; the word גוים is indifferently rendred *Gentiles* and Nations, and it intends no more then the Converſion of the elect *Gentiles*, ſcattered up and down in all Nations; and if it be to be underſtood of ſome whole Nations becoming Chriſtian, it argues nothing of the neceſſity that the Nation ſhould become one Church Organized; but that the Goſpel-Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, and the Goſpel-churches, ſhould overſpread the moſt of a Nation, or prevail upon the ruling part of it (though very ſeldom)

to be brought in Subjection to the Crown, Scepter, and Laws of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; Erected in viſible Churches, planted there.

And its no hinderance, but that chriſtian and religious Magiſtrates have Scope enough to Exert that power which Chriſt hath entruſted them withal, as ſuch, for his Honour and Intereſt, in making and Executing Laws for Reſtraint of Sin, and Encouragement of Vertue, in all matters touching Natural Religion; as likewiſe, in taking care for the effectual Propagation, as much as may be, in a due way and manner, of the Revealed Religion, and by being Nurſing Fathers to the Churches, countenancing and encouraging them in all ſtrict Obſervation of the commands of Chriſt, and Exemplary converſation, both as Churches and particular Chriſtians, defending them from the the Rage, Malice, and

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Perſecution of the Profeſſed Enemies of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

But know that a chriſtian Magiſtrate rightly informed in his Duty as Chriſtian and Magiſtrate, hath a Heart and Opportunity to uſe both thoſe capacities for the Honour and Intereſt of Chriſt, more then a Heathen Magiſtrate; yet his being a Chriſtian, adds not unto his Authority as Magiſtrate, neither doth Chriſtianity *de jure*, extend his Legiſlative Power further then it was before: And therefore if the Magiſtrate, as ſuch, hath a Legiſlative Power in matters of Religion, then all have, and Heathen as well as Chriſtian; and that power which the Magiſtrate hath *Jure divino*, we are bound *Jure divino* to obey. *Ergo* required to be of that Religion the Magiſtrate by Law impoſeth of one kind or another. This is an undeniable conſequence.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Of Parochial Churches.

THere is no ſuch things as a *Parochial Church* deducible from Rules of the Goſpel, neither can it be ſhewed that the word ἐκκλησία in the New Teſtament doth any where import ſuch a meaning from any Application of it there made by the Spirit of God. What Pleas able and learned men have made for ſuch Churches, you muſt give us leave to reject, unleſs they carry Scripture light and demonſtration along with them, without which our minds and conſciences cannot be bound to Faith and Submiſſion.

A *Parochial Church* we take in the moſt common and candid Acceptation

ceptation (without binding our ſelves to the Term Parochial, or Pariſh, that being but of latter times) That all Perſons cohabiting within ſuch Bounds, Limitations, or Diviſions of Ground, becoming a Pariſh, Townſhip, Village, or going under any other Denomination by the Cuſtoms or Laws of the Land where they are: I ſay ſuch Diviſions and Limitations of ground, doth not ſet out the bounds of a Goſpel-Church, but that it may extend further then ſuch Land-marks, or be of leſſer Extent, according to the Number or Situation of the Profeſſing Believers in thoſe parts, for conveniency of their aſſembling together, and Communion for mutual Edification; neither is it neceſſary that all co-inhabitants within ſuch limits ſhould be Members of one and the ſame Congregation; yea that all ſhould be reputed fit matter for any, ſeeing nothing

nothing is more evident and every where experienced, than that there is the greateſt mixture of all ſorts of men in ſuch limits and neighbourhoods; common and natural Juſtice allowing every one that habitation that he can claim a civil right and title to, let him be good or bad; its not Religion that makes men members of this or that Pariſh, or Irreligion that excludes them. Now if co-habitation in ſuch a Precinct makes a man a member of the Church of Chriſt there, (if there be any) it is either becauſe it makes him neceſſarily ſo, or gives him a due claim: if the firſt, he muſt be one whether he be willing or no, and ſo long as he dwells in thoſe limits, they can enforce him to be ſo; and then the Church muſt be ſuppoſed to have a compulſive Power, not only internal by moral Perſwaſions, but a Spiritual, as to the exerciſe of Cenſures towards them

them that are without, which is Nonſence and ridiculous; yea an external compulſive power on mens Perſons and Actions to be exerted by themſelves, or ſome by and under them, in order to make men Church-members; and this is ſo great a contradiction not only to the Tenure of the Goſpel, yea wholly without any Preſident under the old or new Teſtament-conſtitutions, and to the moſt common Underſtanding of the Nature of Religion, that to aſſert it is moſt groſly abſurd to any underſtanding Chriſtian Ear, and therefore not worth inſiſting upon. Or it gives him a right and claim; but co-habitation gives not a man a right and claim; *Ergo:* For then he may come and challenge his right, and they cannot hinder him, pleading that he hath what is neceſſary to Church-memberſhip, *viz.* Cohabitation. Hence no Church would have Power

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er to maintain any Purity of Ordinances and defend them from corrupt communicants, according to the Rules of the Goſpel, and therefore there would be no need of Officers and Diſcipline to this end. Beſides, Excommunication muſt be the Removal of men out of the Pariſh, and nothing elſe: for it is the cutting a man off, from the bond of communion. Now if the Pariſh limits be the bond of Fellowſhip, then Excommunication muſt be the cutting a man off from it; but Chriſt never intended that Church Diſcipline ſhould cut off any one from civil Rights and Properties, and baniſh men.

Yea there is nothing makes the Ordinances of Chriſt ſo cheap and contemptible as ſuch Church work as this, when there is no other Qualification required to adult Church-memberſhip, then cohabitation in the Precinct where ſuch pre-

pretended Church is; and this is ſo neceſſary an enforcing reaſon, that the Inhabitant cannot avoid it without the hazard of the greateſt Penalties from Church and State; neither can the Church refuſe him, making a Profeſſion of chriſtianity at large, though he be otherwiſe the greateſt known Debauchee in all manner of Wickedneſs; nor when he is admitted to communion be rid of him, according to the true Nature of this Rule, but by removing him out of the Pariſh. And therefore I ſuppoſe this is the Reaſon of the Proceeding of ſuch that aſſert Pariſh-churches, that after Excommunication, upon non-return Offenders are committed to a Goal, a Severity that Chriſt and his Apoſtles never thought of, but in a Spirit of Prophecy, when they foreſaw the cruelty and tyranny that would be exerciſed under the Antichriſtian Kingdom. Forcible and impos'd com-

communion is nauſeous to all generous minded men, in natural or civil Societies; no man will be forced to be of a Family by way of Affinity, nor of a Society by incorporation: Nay there's no ſuch Society, Oeconomy, or Body corporate, but look upon it much beneath them to proſtitute their Rights and Priviledges to every Paultry Townſman or Inhabitant, much leſs will impoſe them upon unwilling Perſons, though accounted never ſo worthy.

Laſtly, by this Bond of Church fellowſhip, *viz. Cohabitation*, a man is totally deprived of the uſe of his own Reaſon, Judgment and Conſcience in Spirituals, whereas all Laws leaves us to the uſe of them in temporal and civil affairs; for if a man is immediately of ſuch a Church, as ſoon as he hath rented a houſe, or took Lodgings in ſuch a Pariſh, the whilſt he inhabits there,

there, he cannot upon any terms but of culpable Separation, joyn himſelf to another Church, where he may be more edifyed, tho' but a ſtones caſt from him. And if he was of the other Pariſh before, where he enjoyed God under an able Godly Miniſter, and in the communion of a faithful people; and doth upon family-neceſſity, or conveniency of trade or dwelling, remove but into the next ſtreet over the Pariſh-bounds, where it may be in the next, is an ignorant, ſcandalous, perſecuting and rayling Miniſter, and haply a people not unlike him; (which is no new thing, the Prophets tells us, *Like Prieſts like People*) he is neceſſitated to be a Profeſſed Member of this Synagogue of Satan, and cann't remain a Church-member of the former, by reaſon of his remove. And that this is ſo *de facto*, ſee *Can.* 28. entituled, **Strangers not to be**

admitted to the Communion; *Church-wardens*, &c. *ſhall obſerve*, —*Whether any Strangers come often and commonly from other Pariſhes to their Church, and ſhall ſhew their Miniſters of them, leaſt perhaps they be admitted to the Lords Table amongſt others, which they ſhall forbid, and remit ſuch home to their own Pariſh-Churches, and Miniſters; there to receive the Communion with their reſt of their Neighbours.* Juſt as one Neighbour doth with the others Dogs, when they run into each other houſes a munching: *Home you Cur you, &c.*

Here's no admiſſion of Members of another Pariſh; therefore our concluſion holds good, That by this bond of Communion, Chriſtians are cut off from the free Election of their Miniſter, and Society in holy things: whereas he is not enthralled ſo in worldly matters; he can go out of the Pariſh to chooſe his

his Phyſician, Chirurgion, Wife, Nurſe, Apprentice, Taylor; Trade and deal for any Commodities where he will, excepting Spiritual, and in thoſe he muſt take no better (will he, nill he) then his own Pariſh-ſhop affords. Is not this ſo far from a Goſpel conſtitution of a Church, that it's a miſerable, wretched and damnable device of the Devil, to deſtroy the very nature of Goſpel-Churches, and ruine poor Souls to all intents and purpoſes?

I know what will be ſtill pleaded for a Pariſh Church, without reſpect (ſome will it may be ſay) to the bond of Cohabitation; and that is this,

That where-ever the Word and Sacraments are Adminiſtred, that is a true Church.

To which I anſwer theſe things: 1. There is no politick Society but hath a bond of Union, and if that

be proved null, void and of no effect, as we have done, the whole Society or Corporation falls to the ground; 2. *That which is Sawce for a Gooſe, is for a Gander alſo*; if the Preaching the Word, and Adminiſtring the Sacraments, make a Church without any more; why do the Aſſertors of Pariſh-Churches deny Separate Congregations, where the Word and Sacraments are Adminiſtred, to be ſuch? 3. There may be a Church in a Pariſh where the VVord is Preached, and Sacraments Adminiſtred; but it follows not thence the Pariſh is the Church, It's poſſible there may be a Church of Chriſt in *Algiers*, but then it follows not that the City of *Algiers* is a Church; 4. The 19th. Can. of the Church of *England* ſaith, There ſhould be *a Congregation of faithful men*, and a *due* Adminiſtration, and the *Word* of God *Purely* Preached; Implying,

Implying, that where the Majority at leaſt, which carries the denomination of the whole in all body politicks, are not viſibly faithful men, but otherwiſe, there's not a Church of Chriſt: likewiſe where the word of God is *corruptly* Preached, and the Sacraments *unduely* adminiſtred 5. A Miniſters Preaching by a meer Pariſh-relation, makes him no more a Paſtor, then cohabitation makes the Pariſhioners Members; for a Miniſters Pariſh-relation is only a humane inſtitution, and indeed a matter of Civil Right, (which may be well improved in Reformed Chriſtian Nations) in order to Spiritual Advantage for the intereſt of Chriſt and his true conſtituted Churches, by the countenance of good Magiſtrates; but that it is a Church-relation ſetled on Goſpel-grounds, it would be abſurdly inſolent to pretend. That the eſtabliſhment of

a Ruling Preaching Officer in the Church of Chriſt ſhould be, 1. by the Preſentation of a Forreigner, or a Tyrannical Gentleman or Landlord in the Pariſh, it may be the moſt profeſt Enemy to Chriſt and his Church; and if of the firſt ſort, by one that knows not the temper and diſpoſition of the people, nor the Abilities, Parts and Honeſty of him he Preſents; never regarding ſo much thoſe qualifications whereby he might edify the people, but only ſome carnal ends and advantages, or particular regard to the Perſon of the Pariſh-Rector, to prefer him or provide a competency for his Subſiſtance. This man being preſented, is inſtituted and inducted, takes to the profits for his life, (unleſs he forfeit them by ſome Puritan or Phanatick faults) performs Pariſh-duties as the Law of ſome people requires, this is his Pariſh-relation; but

but not in the leaſt grounded upon the Goſpel. 6. A Miniſter may Preach a great while in any place, to any ſort of people, before there is a Church; as for Converſion, or for tryal of his Gifts and Parts; but none can be ſo abſurd as to affirm that that conſtant Preaching renders the Pariſh a Church: for we know by woful experience, that the word may be powerfully Preached in Pariſhes for a great while, and great part, moſt, or it may be all, be ſcarcely civilized, but remain in Profeſſed Atheiſm, or manifeſt Prophaneneſs; it may be, open Perſecuting Enmity to Godlineſs: And if any ſay it muſt be conſtant Preaching that muſt denominate the Pariſh a Church: I would know how long? And what time is required? If it be ſaid till ſome are brought home to Chriſt, and by a viſible Profeſſion to ſubmit to his Goſpel-Rules and

Government, then the limits of the Church is no further then the effects of the Goſpel, and it comprehends not thoſe Inhabitants that ſtill remain Profeſſed Rebels againſt Chriſt. So that if the Preaching the Goſpel in a Pariſh, renders it a Church of Chriſt, as ſuch, one Sermon will do it as well as a hundred; I ſay if all the Pariſhioners, as ſuch, are to be the Church-members without exception, upon the Goſpel Preached. 7. A Miniſter is often ſent by Chriſtian Magiſtrates, for Converſion of People; ſhall they preſently be a Church, whether they receive or own his Doctrine or no? And it may be none of them, or at leaſt moſt of the Pariſhioners, capable of judging of him or his Doctrine; or a Miniſter ſometimes is impoſed by a Patron or Biſhops, *&c.* upon a capable people, ſhall they preſently fall into a Church-Relation, whether

ther they approve him and chooſe him or no? Such things carry the greateſt abſurdities with them. 8. As Preaching may be in a Pariſh, and no Conſtituted Church of Chriſt there, ſo there may be the Adminiſtration of Sacraments, and no Church of Chriſt there; and if there be in the Pariſh, it makes not the Pariſh a Church. Suppoſe a pretended Miniſter impoſed on a people that evidently enough declares himſelf by his life and Doctrine never to have been ſent of Chriſt, and challengeth the Pariſh by vertue of Humane Laws to be his Church (as they call it) which in general, own no other Church-Relation, but by Cohabitation; this man goes on to Preach the Sentiments of his own Brain, abuſe Scripture, Reproach Godlineſs, rail at, Perſecute and devour the Sheep of Chriſt,

Chriſt, if there be any; joyn in with the wicked, ignorant, lewd and debaucht part of the Pariſh, and do all he can to infect the reſt with the Scab or Rot; This man Baptizeth and Adminiſters the Lords Supper to his Infected Flock, calls the ſoundeſt Schiſmaticks and Separatiſts: Doth this conſtitute a Church of Chriſt, or a Synagogue of Satan? what are all his Admidiſtrations but an Uſurpation? As to the efficacy of the Act done, its not my Province to determine here; I ſhall onely ſay as to the matter of Baptiſm, I roundly affirm, That I believe it no more effectual, than if a Cobler Tinker or Midwife had done it with ſome competent Solemnity. Hence it evidently may be concluded, That the Adminiſtration of Sacraments conſtitutes not a Church of Chriſt, much leſs makes a Pariſh a Church.

But

But in the forementiond inſtances, the whole proceeding of Miniſters and People are a meer uſurpation of Communion in Church Ordinances, and is no better then *Jeroboams* worſhipping *Dan* and *Bethel*, and Conformity thereto no better then the *Iſraelites* Conformity thereto in obedience to their lawful civil Governours, in that which is a declared Abomination to the Lord.

Obj. *You do hereby Unchurch many an eminent Church, where there hath been a Faithful Parish Miniſter, and holy good people walking as his Pariſhioners in Communion with him.*

Anſ. We unchurch no true Church of Chriſt by this means, for it one thing to ſay a thing is a Church, and that it's occaſional of a Church. I deny not but many Miniſters Pariſh-Relation, and Peoples cohabitation, have been occaſions of many Reforming

ing Churches, which Chriſt hath accepted in their degrees of Reformation; but we affirm they were not Churches of Chriſt as ſuch, *i.e.* as Members of a Pariſh; but as a faithful people, related by a Spiritual Bond of Union to Chriſt, and one to another, in Communion of the Word purely Preached, and Sacraments duely Adminiſtred.

Chap.

CHAP. V.

Of the Catholick Viſible Church.

THoſe that ſpeak of a Catholick Viſible Church, ſpeak ſome at one rate, and ſome at another.

If they mean that the Catholick Church is Viſible in the largeſt ſence, as ſuch, we deny it; for it is not viſible to us, nor can be, till all the Elect are called in, and ſo muſt be onely at *the General Aſſembly and Church of the Firſt-born*; for at preſent the moſt eminent part of it is triumphant; many true Believers that are militant, not ſeen or known to us: And ſo to ſay the Catholick Church is Viſible, is to ſet our words and ſences at variance.

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By Catholick Visible, some will say they mean not the whole Universal Church, but so much of it as is visible; but this cannot, for that reason, have the denomination of Catholick Church, because its but a very small part of it, and part cannot be called the whole; besides if it be limited to the Visible Saints militant, I say the universality of them are never visible; either in any congregation, or in communion of any Ordinance, or under any Visible Pastoral Jurisdiction; neither are the particular Members of the *Church* militant visible at the same time, there being no such time when all true Believers are known by their visible Profession.

Some understand by the *Catholick Visible Church*, an Organized *Church* with a visible Pastoral Head, and furnished with Officers suiting a *Catholick* Ruling Power over all *Churches* and Saints on Earth; and this

this is the meaning alwayes of the Papists when they speak of the *Catholick Church*, calling themselves *Catholicks* as Members of it, which *Church* they say, *Rome* is, wherein this universal Pastor and Jurisdiction is placed.

But it is by a cloud of Witnesses asserted that *Christ* never Ordained any universal visible Pastor, nor ever promoted *Peter* above the rest of the Apostles, neither did ever the greatest contender for the *Popes Headship*, and Supremacy over all other Pastors and *Churches*, ever make seeming fair proof of it, for though he sent forth his Apostles as extraordinary Officers, with an extraordinary presence for working Miracles, and healing, in order to the first propagating the Gospel, and Plantation of *Churches*, yet they had but a co-ordinate power, neither were they fixed as standing and lasting Officers in the *Church*, neither

neither was their Apoſtolick power conveyed to any Succeſſors, but dyed with them, leaving only ordinary Officers in the Church. Laſtly, can you read the word ἐκκλησία any where to import in the New Teſtament, a *Church* of this nature, *viz.* a *Catholick Viſible* Organized *Church*. *Chriſt* rather poſitively forbad it, and reproved that ſpirit of Ambition; that was one thing that our Saviour ſaw working in them, labouring to be Dignitaries; *But he that will be chief among you, let him be your Servant*, *Mat.*20.17. &23. 11. 10. 24, 25. Which Reprimand the Mother of *Zebedee*'s children received, when ſhe enquired who ſhould be greateſt among her children.

There are ſix or ſeven ſorts of *Churches* in the latter dayes that entitle themſelves the *Churches* of *Chriſt*, which the Goſpel makes no mention of, *viz.* *Catholick* Organized

ed Visible, such the Church of *Rome*, Patriarchal, National, Provincial, Dioceſan, Archdeconary, Parochial. Theſe ſeem to be *the ſeven women ſpoken of, Iſa.* 4. 1. *that ſhall take hold of one man* [*The Lord Jeſus Chriſt*] *Saying we will eat our own bread, and wear our own Apparel, only let us be called by thy name to take away our reproach.* They will have the name of Chriſt, that they may not be Reproached as the Churches of Antichriſt, and yet will be at their own proviſion for Worſhip and Ordinances by humane inventions. But for all this, tho' theſe whoriſh women make a ſhift by a common vogue to carry the name of the True Goſpel Churches throughout the world, his True Spouſe, though ſmall and contemptible as to outward appearance, ſhall be glorious, ver. 2. *In that day the branch of the Lord ſhall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the*

earth ſhall be excellent and comely for them that are eſcaped of Iſrael, ver. 3. *And it ſhall come to paſs, that he that is left in Zion* [*in that great Apoſtacy*] *and he that remaineth in* Jeruſalem *ſhall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in* Jeruſalem. See what follows from ver. 4. to the end.

This I take to be the true meaning of that place; for 1. Women in the Prophetick phraſe are Churches, as frequent inſtances may be given. 2. The number may be definite for an indefinite. 3. The Prophecy is manifeſtly of the latter dayes, and the Churches ſtate therein, which none will deny.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the moſt uſual acceptation of the word Church, in the New Teſtament.

WE have ſhewed that in one place the word ἐκκλησία is taken for any common Aſſembly, lawful or unlawful, *Acts* 19. 32, 39. and likewiſe that it's once taken for a National Church, *Acts* 7. 38.

But in all other places, it's either taken for the Univerſal *Church* of Chriſt, or for particular Congregations; and for no other ſorts of Churches.

The Universal Church of Christ is one Organized Body, Christ being the Head, and all the Saints Triumphant, and Militant, the Members; united together, either by a real Bond, visible or invisible, or both.

This Church of Christ either is mentioned in the New Testament in the most general consideration; or more particularly, referring to it in the mystical part of it, or to the Visible Externally Organized parts of it, which are the particular Churches. I shall briefly go through the places of the New Testament, where it's used, for the Readers satisfaction. It is taken for the Body of Christ under the most general and comprehensive signification, and so it's to be understood of a Body consisting of Head and Members, made up of visible and invisible, real and professing only.

The places carrying it in this

sence,

ſence, are, Mat. 16. 18. *Upon this Rock will I build my Church, i. e.* my whole Spiritual Fabrick ſhall be built upon that Perſon and Doctrine which thou haſt born witneſs to in this Profeſſion.

Epheſ. 1. 22, 23. *Hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to his Church, which is his Body, the fullneſs of him that filleth all in all.* Col. 1. 24. *Who now rejoyce in my Sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind, of the Afflictions of Chriſt* [myſtical] *in my Flesh, for his Bodies ſake, which is the Church.* Note that where the Church is called the Body of Chriſt, it is meant of the Univerſal *Church* for the moſt part.

Eph. 3. 10. *To the intent that now unto Principalities and Powers in Heavenly Places, might be made known by the Church the manifold Wiſdom of God, i. e.* by the whole

Church both militant and triumphant, by the eminent Grace and Glory ſhinning forth in them, even to the admiration of Angels; even to ſee, ver. 9. *The Fellowſhip of the Myſtery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God*, &c. And ver. 21. *Unto him be Glory in the Church by Jeſus Chriſt, throughout all Ages, world without end.*

Epheſ. 5. 25. *He hath loved his Church, and given himſelf for it*; ver. 27. *to make it a glorious Church*, 29. *No man hateth his own fleſh, but nouriſheth it and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church*, *i. e.* the whole Church; *for we are Members of his body, of his flesh and his bones*: ver. 32. *This is a great Myſtery, but I ſpeak of Chriſt and his Church.*

Heb. 12. 23. *To the General Aſſembly and Church of the firſt born*, which muſt be underſtood of the Univerſal Church in its pureſt and moſt

most glorious state, both militant and triumphant; to which every true Believer comes when he is united by Faith to Christ the Head. Πανήγυρις there is the only word in the New Testament can be rendred Catholick Assembly.

2. Church is taken in the New Testament for the visible part of the Catholick *Church*, 1 Cor. 12. 27, 28. *Ye are the Body of Christ, and Members in particular, and God hath set some in the Church first Apostles, then Prophets, &c.* In this and such like places *Church* is taken primarily for the Universal *Church*, though there be many things applyed thereto, which more immediately belong to the visible parts of it in particular simular Congregations, and differing Members, in respect of Office, Grace, or Gifts. And so it's to be understood in the place last quoted; as also, Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13. a Parallel Place, and such is, Rom. 12. 4, 5, 6, 7. Lastly,

Lastly, 1 Tim. 3. 15. *That thou may'st know how to behave thy self in the house of God, which is the Church of God,* [*i. e.* in a particular part of the Universal *Church*] *which is the pillar and ground of truth* [*i. e.* the Universal Church is the pillar and ground of Truth in the world, to defend and maintain it, and hold forth the light of it; but every particular Church is a Candlestick to hold the Candle of the Gospel-Light, and Profession, and Ordinances, among which Christ walks. These are all the places so near as I can find, which have reference to the Catholick Church, where *Ecclesia*, or *Church*, is mentioned, unless those that speak of *Pauls* Persecuting the Church, which may be understood not only actual Persecuting the Particular Church of *Jerusalem*, but of the whole Body of Christ, because 1. that Church was all as yet Planted, and 2. because

cauſe Chriſt takes his rage and enmity to be levyed and managed againſt his myſtical Body, Acts 9. *Saul, Saul, why Perſecuteſt thou me?* The places are theſe, 1 Cor. 15. 9. Gal. 1. 13. Phil. 3. 6. Acts 8. 3.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Of a Particular Church.

I come in the next place to ſhew what the word Church importeth in all other Texts of the New Teſtament, were it is uſed, not yet mentioned, which is far the greater part.

And to make it evident, that no other Church is by them intended then ſuch an one which is deſcribed in the 19th Article of the Church of *England*, *viz. A Church is a Congregation of Faithful Men, where the pure Word of God is Preached, and the Sacraments duly Adminiſtred, according to Gods holy Ordinances,*

nances; which can have no other underſtanding, then that of a *Particular Church.* I need not deſcant upon it, it carryes ſo much plainneſs and correſpondency to the genuine ſence of a Church in all places of the Goſpel, where a particular Church is intended, that there is no room for exception.

The firſt Text is, Mat. 18. 17. *Tell the Church*, which is the particular Congregation of faithful men, *&c.* Its nonſence to ſuppoſe that a National or Provincial Church is here meant; that upon every offence between brother and brother, an addreſs muſt be made to a Council, Synod, Archbiſhop or Biſhop; and where have we Counſels or Synods, or Paſtors called Churches in any place of the New Teſtament? If any man pretend to object that our Saviour here intended the Church of the Jews; and that to tell the Church, was to

tell

tell the *Sanhedrim*: Let ſuch an one *give* one inſtance, that the *Sanhedrim* is called the Church in Old or New Teſtament; I am ſure not in the New: neither is it rational to ſuppoſe that our Saviour gave here Rules for the Oeconomy of the Jewiſh Church, which was ſo ſoon after to be diſſolved as to its whole conſtitution, our Saviour never intending the erection of a National Church more.

2. The next Texts are Acts 2. 47. *And the Lord added to the Church daily ſuch as ſhould be ſaved.* This was without diſpute a particular Congregation, for there was as yet but that one, which was that CXX which Chriſt left together at his Aſcention. This was the Congregation of the Faithful which was added to; which is the ſame Church that was ſpoken of, Acts 5. 11. *Fear fell upon all the Church, or Congrega-*

Of the Church of Jeruſalem:

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on of the Faithful. The firſt multiplying of Churches, was occaſioned by *Sauls* Perſecution, after the ſtoning of *Stephen*; ſcattering a great part of this Congregation, now grown too big for one: Acts 8. 1, 3. *There was a great Perſecution againſt the Church which was at Jeruſalem*; againſt this Church in particular, *Sauls* Perſecution was breathed, which he mentions afterward, 1 *Cor.* 15. 9. *Gal.* 1. 13. *Phil.* 3. 6. after which he continnes to breath out threatnings and ſlaughter, and aſſay's to purſue them to *Damaſcus*, and other places, Acts 9. 1. near which place Chriſt ſtops his Career.

But notwitſtanding this ſcattering, which God turn'd to the advantage of the Goſpel, and encreaſe of Churches, by the Preaching of *Philip* and other ſcattered brethren, ſo that as chap. 8. and 11. ver. 19. and in ver. 21. *The hand of the Lord*

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was with them, and a great number were added to the Lord: So that in *Judea*, the Churches of *Samaria*, and *Galilee*, were gathered, *Acts* 9.31. It appears also the Body of that Jerusalem-Church still remained, & tydings coming to them of the marvellous success of the Ministry of the scattered Disciples, they sent forth *Barnabas*, Acts 11.22: *Then tydings of these things came to the ears of the Church which was in* Jerusalem, *and they sent forth* Barnabas *that he should go as far as* Antioch, &c. *ver.* 25. from thence he departed to *Tarsus* to seek *Saul*, *ver.* 26. And when he had found him he brought him to *Anticch*, and it came to pass, *that a whole year they Assembled themselves with the Church, and taught much people*, i. e. besides the Churches, this is the First Gospel-Church of the Gentiles we read of. Now that this was a Congregation

The Church of Antioch

gation of the Faithful, converted firſt by the Miniſtry of the Scattered, it appears in that *Barnabas* firſt fell upon confirming work, v. 23. *When he came and had ſeen the Grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all that with purpoſe of heart they would cleave unto the Lord*; and by his further labours the Church was encreaſed, v. 24. *and much people were added unto the Lord*; though I will not deny, this expreſſion may *intend his firſt forming them into a* Church, before the coming of *Saul*, after which we are aſſured it was a Formed Church ſeparated from the reſt of the people of *Antioch*, yea, from many that were frequent hearers of the Word, as appears verſe 26.

After this a ſecond Perſecution ariſeth againſt the Church of *Jeruſalem*, Act. 12. 1. *Now about that time* Herod *the King ſtretch-*

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ed forth his hands to vex certain of the Church, and killed James, *and impriſoned* Peter; *for whom Prayer was made without ceaſing of the Church unto God for him*; verſe 5, 12. *viz.* Aſſembled in a private Meeting.

Chap 13. 1. We have an Account of *Certain Prophets* in the Church of *Antioch*, a ſort of extraordinary Officers in the Primitive Churches, mentioned next after Apoſtles, *Eph.* 4. 11. Theſe were charged by the Holy Ghoſt to ſet apart *Barnabas* and *Saul* to the work whereunto he had called them, which being ſent forth, they went their Progreſs to *Seleucia*, *Cyprus*, *Salamis*, *Paphos*, *Perga* in *Pamphilia*, and from thence to *Antioch* in *Piſidia*, chap. 13. verſe 14. there *Paul* preached in the Synagogue with great acceptation of the Proſelyte *Gentiles*, who aſſembled to hear the next Sabbath from all

all parts of the City; but the *Jews contradicting and blaſpheming*, they declare the rejection of the *Jews, and there turn to the Gentiles*, ver. 46, 47. Being Perſecuted from this *Antioch they came to Iconium*, to the *great joy of the Diſciples*, verſe 51, 52. Here they Preached with ſucceſs, chap. 14. 1. but were oppoſed by the Unbelieving *Jews*, and Perſecuted to *Lyſtra* & *Derbe*, verſe 20. *Cityes of Lycaonia*: At *Lyſtra* cured the Cripple, and like to be worſhipped for Gods; but the *Jews* from *Antioch and Iconium* change the Scene, ver. 19. and *Paul* was ſtoned; but recovered, departed to *Derbe*, and after Preaching there, returned to *Lyſtra, Iconium and Antioch of Piſidia, confirming the Diſciples*, verſe 22, 23. *ordaining Elders in every Church*. Theſe Churches of *Lyſtra, Iconium*, and *Antioch*, were gathered at the A-

Churches of Lyſtra, Iconium, Antioch *of* Piſidia.

ſtles firſt coming, and at their return to confirm them, they ordained Elders in them. Theſe were not National Churches; *Antioch* was of the Region of *Piſidia*; nor was the whole limit of any of theſe places of the Church, but a few of each that were wrought upon by, and ſubmitted to their Miniſtry. From *Piſidia*, they came to the Province of *Pamphilia*, ver. 24. where they Preached at *Perga*, went to *Attalia*, and thence ſailed to the firſt *Antioch*, where theſe two Apoſtles, ſo called ver. 14. were Ordained, and from whence they were ſent to this Apoſtolick work of gathering Churches, and ſetling Elders in them; here they give the Church of *Antioch* an account of what God had done by them, in opening a door of faith unto the Gentiles, verſe 27. and abode there a long time. During their abode there, diſturbance was raiſed

raiſed by ſome men that came from *Judea*, and taught the neceſſity of *circumciſion*, chap. 15. 1, 2, 3. whereupon the Apoſtles and certain others were ſent to *the Apoſtles and Elders at* Jeruſalem *about this queſtion, and were brought on their way by the* Church, verſe 3. I ſuppoſe none can conjecture that here was any Church beſides a Congregation of Faithful; no Houſe-church, that could bring the Apoſtles on their way; no National or Provincial Church; it's not to be ſuppoſed, that all the Province or City of *Antioch* accompanied them, but only thoſe few that were gathered into a Church; and they not taken all in one Pariſh or Precinct of the City, but here and there, as it pleaſed God by his Grace to work. When they came, verſe 4. to *Jeruſalem*, they were received *by the Church, Apoſtles and Elders*, where the queſtion was determined, verſe

22. and return made (with the reſolves of the Apoſtles and Church of *Jeruſalem*) to *Antioch*, and ſtaying ſome time there, confirmed the Diſciples. But ſome days after *Paul* and *Barnabas* agreeing to depart to reviſit the Cities where they Preached, they diſagreed about taking *John Mark*, *and ſo* parted; *Paul* then took *Silas*, and went through *Syria and Cilicia*, *Barnabas took Mark and went to Cyprus*; places where they had been, verſe 36, 37. confirming the Churches, v. 41. I ſhall proceed no further in theſe two Apoſtles travells; this being enough to ſhew what ſort of Churches were firſt planted by them; and to ſhew where any mention is made of Church, and that's but in two places more in the *Acts*, Acts 18.

Church of Cæſarea.

22. *After he had Landed at* Ceſarea, *and went up and ſaluted the Church, he went down*

down to Antioch, *and* chap. 20. 17. *from* Miletus *he ſent to* Epheſus *and called the Elders of the Church, and charged them,* v. 28. *Take heed therefore to your ſelves, and to all the Fleck, over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you Overſeers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his Blood.* Miletus.

Now what were theſe but ſuch Congregations that accompanyed the Apoſtles, that was ſaluted by them; that they confirmed, and were purchaſed by Chriſts blood; is it ſence to think they were Houſes, or whole Nations, or Provinces, or Cities? no they were thoſe faithful ones, who being gathered into particular Congregations by the Miniſtry firſt of the Prophets, (*i. e.* the ſcattered Brethren from *Jeruſalem*) were ſetled and confirmed by the Apoſtles, who Ordained Officers reſpectively among them. *Building of living ſtones.*

I proceed in the next place to the Churches to whom the ſeveral Epiſtles were wrote.

We read not the word Church in any part of the Epiſtles to the *Romans*, but in the 16th chapter, and there referring to other Churches, as verſe 1. he ſpeaks of *Phebe* a Deaconeſs of the Church at *Cenchrea*, and verſe 4: mentions all the Churches of the *Gentiles*, verſe 5. ſalutes the Church in *Aquila*'s houſe, verſ. 16. *The Churches of Chriſt ſalute you.* Though we have reaſon enough to believe that there was at this time a conſtituted Church at *Rome*, becauſe firſt he writes to them as *beloved of God, and called to be Saints*, chap. 1. verſe 7. Secondly, becauſe he gives Rules to them for walking towards each other as thoſe in Fellowſhip, chap. 14. Thirdly, *Phebe* is recommended to them from the Church

The Church of the Romans.

Church at *Cenchrea*, which would not have been, had they not been a Church.

In the Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, we have more mention made of the word *Church* then in any Epiſtle, importing a Particular Congregation; and we may begin with that deſcription the Apoſtle gives of it, 1 Cor. 1. 2. *Unto the Church of God which is at* Corinth, *to them that are ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be Saints, &c.* he writes not to all the Inhabitants of *Corinth*, but to the Church, which he tells you what they are, *ſanctified in Chriſt Jeſus, called to be Saints*; which words are exegetical of Church; ſo he directs his ſecond Epiſtle, 2 Cor. 1. 1. *Unto the Church of God which is at* Corinth, *with all the Saints which are in all* Achaia: *Corinth* was a City of the Province of *Achaia*, and he writes

The Church of Corinth.

primarily to the Church at *Corinth*, and likewiſe to all the Saints which were in that Province, whether they were actually in Church Fellowſhip or no. I ſhall briefly mention all the other Texts where Church is taken plainly for ſuch a Particular Congregation as is deſcribed in the firſt Epiſtle, chap. 1.

1 Cor. 4. 17. *I have ſent unto you* Timotheus, — *who ſhall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Chriſt, as I teach every where in every Church*; i. e. every particular Congregation.

1 Cor. 6. 4. *If then you have judgment of things appertaining to this life, ſet them to judge who are leaſt eſteemed in the Church*; i. e. in the Church of the *Corinths*, of them its primarily intended, and as a rule for other particular Churches, where no ſuch thing as Chriſtian civil Magiſtrates was in thoſe times. 1 Cor. 7. 17. *As the Lord hath*

hath called every one, ſo let him walk and ſo ordain I in all the Churches, i. e. as a Rule for every particular member of each Church.

1 Cor. 11. 16. *If any man ſeemeth to be contentious, we have no ſuch Cuſtom, nor the Churches of God.*

Verſe 18. *When you come together in the Church*, [i. e. the Aſſembly, not meant of the meeting place, as before noted; the ſame ſence as in verſe 22.]

Chap. 14. 4. *He that Propheſieth Edifieth the Church*, i. e. *the Congregation that heareth him.*

And verſe 5. his reaſon of preferring Prophecying is given, *viz. That the Church may receive Edifying*; therefore ſaith, verſe 12. *Seek that ye may excel, that the Church may receive Edifying*; and verſe 19. *In the Church I had rather ſpeak five words with my Underſtanding that I might teach others.* Verſe 23. *If the whole Church be come together in one place.*

Verſe

Verſe 28 *If there be no Interpreter, let him keep ſilence in the Church*, &c. Verſe 33. *God is not the Author of Confuſion, but of Peace; as in all the Churches of the Saints.* Verſe 34. *Let your Women keep ſilence in the Churches.* Verſe 35. *For it is a ſhame for Women to ſpeak in the Church.*

Chap. 16. 1. *Concerning the Collection for the Saints, as I have given Order to the Churches* [ſuch as are in the Province] *of Galatia, even ſo do ye.* Where ſhould Collections be made, but in particular Congregations? Verſe 19. *The Churches of* Aſia, [i. e. of that Region] *ſalute you*; Aquila *and* Preſcilla *ſalute you, and the Church in their Houſe*; it may be that frequently aſſembled there, or that was for the moſt part belonging to their Family; there might be enough for a competent Congregation in ſuch times as thoſe: that Church is mentioned more times.

2 Cor.

2 Cor. 8. 1. *We do you to wit of the Grace of God bestowed on the Churches of Macedonia*; the word is always uſed in the plural Number, when its applyed to Nations, Provinces [*Macedonia* was a Province] Regions, as of *Galatia*, *Macedonia*, *Aſia*, *Judea*.

Verſe 18, 19. *We have ſent with him the Brother whoſe praiſe is in the Goſpel throughout all the Churches*, verſe 19. *And not that only, but who were alſo choſen of the Churches to travel with us*; the word is, χειροτονηθεὶς and might be rendred ordained, as well as in other places.

Verſe 23. *They are Meſſengers of the Churches.* Verſe 24. *Wherefore ſhew to them and before the Churches the proof of your Love.* Chap. 11. 8. *I robbed other Churches to ſerve you.*

2 Cor. 11. 28. *That which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the Churches*, viz. as to his Apoſtolical Office.

2 Cor.

2 Cor. 12, 13. *What is it wherein you are inferiour to other Churches.* It ſeems there's no ſuperiority of one particlar Church above another, but are all co-ordinate.

The word is thrice uſed in the Epiſtle to the *Gallatians*, Chap. 2. 1, 2. *Paul an Apoſtle — and all the Brethren which are with me, unto the Churches of* Galatia [a Province] Verſe 13. *You have heard of my Converſation, how that beyond meaſure I perſecuted the Church of God, and waſted it*; *i. e.* the Church of *Jeruſalem*, which was only extant when he began his Perſecution; and for ought I know, while it laſted, for that was a principal occaſional cauſe of ſcattering the *Jeruſalem* Church, in order to Propagation; but he tells them of more Churches in the Province of *Judea*, after his Converſion. Verſe 21, 22. *Afterwards I came into the Regions*

of

of Syria *and* Cilicia, *and was unknown by face unto the Churches of* Judea, *which were in Christ.*

The Apoſtle directs the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians* thus, *To the Saints which are at Epheſus, and to the faithful in Chriſt Jeſus*; which terms have a ſynonymous acceptation moſt times with a Church, and we have ground enough to believe there was an Eſtabliſhed Church there when *Paul* wrote, he writing of ſuch high myſteries concerning Chriſt and his *Church*; but we are fully aſſured of it afterward, when *John* wrote, *Rev.* 2. 1. where he directs his Epiſtle to the *Epheſian Church*, as if to the *Dutch*, or *French* Church in *England*, or the *Epheſian* Congregation at *Epheſus*; but in all places where *Church* is mentioned in this Epiſtle, he treats only of the Catholick Church, as hath been ſhewed, being his deſign moſtly to ſhew the

Beauty

Beauty, Glory and Myſtery of Chriſt Myſtical, *&c.*

He directs his Epiſtle to *Philippi* in the ſame manner, and mentions the word Church but twice; the firſt is where he ſpeaks of his *Zeal in Perſecuting the Church*, i. e. of *Jeruſalem*, Philip. 3. 6. and 4. 15. where he ſaith, *No Church communicated with me as to giving and receiving, but ye only*: So that the Saints at *Philippi* were the Church.

Church of Philippi.

The Epiſtle to *Coloſs*, is directed *to the Saints and faithful Brethren in Chriſt who are at* Coloſs, chap. i, 2. *i. e.* the Congregation of the faithful there where this Epiſtle was to be firſt read, and then in the Church *of Laodicea*, chap. 4. 16. He mentions alſo the *Church in the Houſe of* Nymphas; every where elſe the word relates to the *Catholick Church* in this Epiſtle, as hath been ſhewed.

Church of Coloſs.

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The Apoſtle directs his ſecond Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, verſe 1. *To the Church of the Theſſalonians*, and ſuch a Church as took their pattern from the Churches of God in *Judea*, 1 Theſſ. 2. 14. and therefore he ſaith 2 Theſſ. 1. 4. *We our ſelves glory in the Churches of God for their Patience and Faith in all our Perſecutions.* Church of Theſſalonica.

The Epiſtle to *Timothy* ſpeaks of particular Churches, 1 Tim. 3. 5. *If a man know not how to rule his own Houſe, how ſhall he take care of the Church of God*, i. e. ſuch a one as falls under a Paſtoral care in a mans capacity of Government, as a Family doth; and 1 Tim. 5. 16. *Let not the Church be charged*; that is, the particular Congregation, where Church charges ariſe, as the Context ſhews.

In the Epiſtle to *Philemon* he ſpeaks of the *Church in his Houſe*, i. e.

i. e. that did uſually aſſemble there, as indeed all the Church-Aſſemblies were in thoſe times in private Houſes, and this is the third Church in a private Family that is expreſly mentioned by *Paul*; there was *Aquila*'s, *Nymphas*'s and *Philemon*'s.

The Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* hath the word Church but twice, the firſt is, chap. 2. 12. *I will declare* thy *Name unto my Brethren in the midſt of the* Church, *I will ſing Praiſe unto thee*; a place taken out of the Pſalms, where in the next and Primary Signification, the Pſalmiſt, ſo far as he means himſelf, its to be underſtood of a particular Congregation, where God is praiſed; and ſo far as its Prophetically applyed to Chriſt, its meant of the Catholick Church; in the fore-going verſe, ſaying, *He that ſanctifieth and who they are ſanctified, are all one: for which*

ſake

ſake he is not aſhamed to call them brethren, ſaying, &c.

And chap. 12. 23. He *ſpeaks expreſly* of the Catholick without diſpute.

The Apoſtle *James* ſpeaks of the Elders of a particular Church expreſly, *James* 5. 14.

So *John*'s third Epiſtle, verſe 6, 9, 10.

John in the *Revelations* makes mention of the Word in the ſingular and plural number, no leſs then nineteen or twenty times; and always to be underſtood of particular Churches. I will only name the Texts that the Reader may inſpect at his Leiſure. *Revel.* 1. 4, 11, 20. *Chap.* 2. 1, 7, 8, 12, 17, 18, 23, 29. *Chap.* 3. 1, 6, 7, 13, 14, 22. *Chap.* 22. 16.

I find the word Church uſed in the New Teſtament, about 85 times in this ſence, *viz.* of a particular Congregation, and cannot by any

candid Reader be ſuppoſed to have any other meaning, nor with the leaſt ſhew of reaſon, be underſtood of any Meeting-houſe, National, Provincial, Dioceſan, or Parochial conſtitution, but only of a Congregation of Saints by mutual conſent ordinarily aſſembling together, for Attendance on Chriſt in all his Ordinances.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Inferences neceſſary from the Fore-going Chapter.

IT being diſcovered in what ſences the word Church is taken in the New Teſtament; its an idle and vain thing for Chriſtians to trouble and concern their heads and Conſciences about humorſome conceipts and imaginations of mens brains; managed for the moſt part to ſerve their carnal Intereſts, or darken the Truth. Let men give up themſelves and Underſtandings impartially to the plain, and genuine Sence and meaning of the Spirit of God, without ſqueezing or wreſting it to a deſign or prejudicate Opinion, or favouring any beloved Luſt, and the truth of the Goſpel

would ſhine with full Evidence and Demonſtration. And therefore notwithſtanding mens great ſwelling and words of Vanity from Pulpit and Preſs, in matters of this nature, we ſhall make bold to lay down theſe following Aſſertions as undeniable plain Concluſions from what hath been ſpoken.

1. That the Goſpel Church Eſtabliſhed by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt in the dayes of the New Teſtament, is or can be no where underſtood of any other Church then the Catholick Church, or particular Congregations of faithful men, *&c.* and that there is no one place that can have any fair pretence to be underſtood of any other conſtitution of Churches.

2. That where-ever the word ἐκκλησία is uſed, it always ſignifies a Congregation or Aſſembly of men met together, at leaſt occaſionally, upon ſome civil, ſpiritual, or ſinful Account;

Account; and that we need not be beholding to any Tropical Sences, or ungrounded ſuppoſal of things, and meanings of Words, ſo remote, when in the plain and ordinary way of Underſtanding, things preſent themſelves to our Reaſons and Senſes; If we be not blinded with Pride, Paſſion, Prejudice, and Eſtrangement from the true way of Spiritual Underſtanding, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, and conſonacy of things to the Analogy of Faith.

3. We infer, That a Congregation of faithful men is the generical material part of a Church, becauſe it comprehends all the matter that is ever found in any Goſpel Church of any kind; all fit matter for ſuch a Congregation, are ſuch as are really ſo, or viſibly, (*in foro mundi*) or both. And alſo, becauſe there is no Church of Chriſt ſpoken of, or mentioned in

Old or New Teſtament, but is ſo called under the Notion of being a Congregation to be ſometime or other Aſſembled all together; the Catholick Church is ſo under that Notion, as being all gathered together actually and myſtically in Chriſt, and ſhall all appear one day in a glorious Congregation, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. Where πανήγυρις is to be underſtood as *R. St.* renders it, *Publicus conventus*, a general Publick Aſſembly: likewiſe, wherever the Spirit of God ſpeaks of a Church of his own conſtituting, its always ſo.

The Old Teſtament Church was called ſo under that notion; though National, yet was required to be ſtill Congregational; all the Males being required thrice a year to appear before the Lord in a Viſible Congregation at the Tabernacle; (therefore called the Tabernacle of the Congregation) or at the Tem-

ple

ple, where it was in ſtanding; and it is ſo often called the Congregation of the children of *Iſrael*; the Reader may turn to theſe places at leiſure, *Exod.* 16. 2. 10. *Levit.* 4. 13. *ch.* 14. 2. *&* 20. 1, 22. *Joſ.* 18. 1. ch. 22. 12, 16, 18. 2 Chr. 6. 3. *Ezra.* 2. 64. And the whole Congregation together 42360: theſe more or leſs made up one Aſſembly, theſe were Preached to by *Ezra*; and whatever the number of the Nation was, they were to meet all together in one place. And ſo we have the word applyed to the Church in the New Teſtament, that it alwayes ſignifies a Congregation that doth ordinarily meet together for their edification, if it be meant of a Particular Church; but if an Univerſal, ſuch a Church as ſhortly ſhall Aſſemble, and always ſit together in a laſting ſinleſs and uninterrupted communion. So that a true Church of Chriſt under

whatever Notion you take it, muſt be and is a Congregation of Saints, viſible, inviſible, or both, that do meet together in one place, for the Worſhip of God in Chriſt, and communion in one body.

4. We infer that we have part of the differencing form in that Deſcription, *viz.* where the pure word is Preached, and Sacraments duely Adminſtred, *&c.* for it diſtinguiſheth the true Church, diſtinguiſheth the true viſible Churches from falſe and erroneous, it diſtinguiſheth a particular Church from the Catholick, for there is no Church but a particular Congregation capable of having the word preached to it, and Sacraments duely adminiſtred in one Congregation, but a particular Church; when the Catholick Church aſſembles, there will be neither.

5. We find not the leaſt word in Old or New Teſtament, of a Repreſen-

preſentative Congregation, or Church-Repreſentative; the Congregation of the *Jews* was to be by a Perſonal Appearance of all the Males, the Females were exempted upon Gods ſpecial Diſpenſation, by reaſon of their unfitneſs for Travel, as from circumciſion by reaſon of incapacity. But we find that every viſible Church of Chriſt ſtill appeared before the Lord perſonally, for actual communion in Church Ordinances, in that way and method that God appointed in his Reſpective Diſpenſations; and we are fully aſſured there is no Repreſentative Church of Chriſts inſtitution, either Councels, or Synods, or Presbyteries. We read not of any Presbytery, *i. e.* Aſſociation of Elders called the Church, but the Church is always ſpoken of diſtinctly from them. If there had been any Reaſon to have called any Elderſhip the Church, there had

had been Reaſon to have called that ſo in the Apoſtolick Church, which had ſo many famous Apoſtles, Prophets, and Evangeliſts in in it; but they are named diſtinctly in that great Councel held at *Jeruſalem*, Act. 15. 22. *It pleaſed the Apoſtles and Elders, with the whole Church.*

6. The Univerſal Church doth comprehend all the particular Congregations in all Ages and places, (being ſimular and co-ordinate parts of it) of the viſible Saints, where(by the Inſtitution of Chriſt the Head) all the Ordinances are placed, and by his influence there is a ſupply of Graces and gifts, for the Edification of his Body, as likewiſe all Officers, and Offices, as appears, *Eph.* 4. 11, 12. of which there were *Extraordinary and Ordinary.*

7. The extraordinary Officers were inſtituted for an extraordinary Occaſion, *viz.* the firſt Plantation of the Goſpel-churches: They were

were *Apoſtles*, *Prophets*, *Evangeliſts*; the *call* of theſe, *the works and Qualifications*, *was extraordinary*: Theſe continued no longer than the firſt Age of the Church.

8. The Ordinary remaining Officers are no more than *Presbyters*, (which ſome make a little diſtinction of) *Paſtors*, *Teachers*, *Ruling Elders*,) but there is no need of multiplication of Titles and Offices, where the work doth ſo much correſpond, and is of the ſame nature) *and Deacons*; the firſt ſort to give themſelves principally to Prayer, and the Miniſtry of the Word, and Government: the latter to mind the matters of more external concern, called *Tables*, as the neceſſities of the Poor, the providing Elements for Sacraments, conveniencies for Church-aſſemblies, and whatever is neceſſary upon ſuch Occaſions. Theſe Officers are no where found with a capacity

city to exert their Power as *such*, but in particular Congregations; tho' they be members of the Catholick Church, they are not Catholick Officers; Christ is now the only Catholick Officer, being the Head of the whole Body.

9. All the Officers of the Gospel-church were placed in the one Catholick Church, primarily and immediately relating to Christ Mystical, secondarily and mediately, to the several visible militating parts thereof in particular Congregations; and their Office-work was either for the planting and gathering in to them, or for the edification of those gathered: The Extraordinary had an extraordinary call, furnished with an extraordinary measure of the Spirit, as with an extraordinary Commission; the Ordinary had not these, but sufficient both of the Spirit and commission for answering Christs glorious ends and designs

ſigns in building his Church in future Ages, and gathering more.

10. It appears that the true actual members of the viſible Church are viſible Saints and Believers, none that were adult were ever counted ſo in the Goſpel-ſence, but under the Notion of the Profeſſion of Faith and Practice of Holineſs. True Faith makes a man a true Member of the myſtical Body of Chriſt, but cannot inſtate a man *in foro Eccleſiæ*, in the rights of viſible communion, till it manifeſts it ſelf with credibility unto thoſe to whom the Preſervation of theſe Rights and Priviledges are committed, the actual Officers and Members of a viſible Church. The Rule that Chriſt hath given for knowing and judging of others is by their Fruits, and if the Church be miſtaken for want of Infallibility, (which the Apoſtles themſelves came ſhort in, *Simon Magus* and *Judas*

das being not known to them but by the Diſcovery of overt Acts) God chargeth them not culpably with it, that being a Prerogative that Chriſt reſerves to himſelf, and none ever Pretended to it but the falſe Prophet, the great Spiritual Uſurper; and it appears that our Saviour reſerved this Diadem to himſelf in the *Embrio* of the Goſpel-church, by his Behaviour towards *Judas*, admitting him to viſible communion, meerly upon an outward Profeſſion, though he knew his Heart; leaving his Practice as an Example to his Miniſters and Churches; carrying himſelf as a viſible Paſtor, and dealt with men in the caſe of receiving to, or rejecting from communion, according to the viſibility of their Profeſſion: therefore leaving it as a ſtanding Rule to his Church for future proceeding in this kind; not that he eſteemed Hypocrites any part

of

of his myſtical Body, but yet the preſent Profeſſion giving them by his own Rules a right to all External Priviledges, and a Reputation, nothing inferiour to others; he ſpeaks of them in ſome Phraſes which to minds not throughly informed in the Truth, create much difficulty, as John 17. 11. *Holy Father, keep through thy name thoſe whom thou haſt given me, that they may be one as we are*; i. e. all thoſe that thou haſt given me to be of my myſtical Body, that they may be united in Participation of the Divine Nature, as we are one; verſ. 12. *While I was with them in the World* [as a viſible Paſtor among them] *I kept them in thy Name*; *of thoſe thou gaveſt me*, [that is the charge of, as a viſible Paſtor, and that I took upon their viſible Profeſſion,] *I have loſt none but the Son of Perdition.* So John 15. 2. *Every branch in me* [in the Church by

by a visible Profession] *that beareth not fruit, he taketh away*: verse 6. *If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withered.* So 1 John 2. 19. *They went out from us,* [as a visible Church] *but were not of us*; as part of the Catholick Body.

11. Churches of Christ are and may be in Nations, Provinces, Dioceses, Parishes, though those limits of co-habitation are not so, as such; *Jerusalem, Corinth, Antioch, Ephesus, Smyrna, Colos*, &c. were not Churches as such, though there was a Church or Churches, in each of those Towns or Cities, therefore we read of the Church in *Corinth*, and when he speaks of Provinces or larger Tracts, he saith the Churches of such a place, in the plural number, *viz.* Churches of *Galatia, Macedonia, Judea*, &c. and therefore, the Language of the Spirit of God now, if he spake as then

then, would be to ſay, The Churches of *England*, *France*, *Spain*, and not the Church, ſuppoſing all the Churches in ſuch a Province or Nation, to be Organized into one Body, under one viſible Paſtor, according to our corrupt Dialect and Underſtanding.

12. Hence laſtly it is manifeſt that however it came to paſs that by the ſubtile inſinuation of the Myſtery of Iniquity, ſeveral Antichriſtian Fabricks have had the Reputation of the Churches of Chriſt; yet it appearing that they are nothing ſo indeed by Chriſts conſtitution; They are juſtly ſeparated from by all truely informed in the mind and will of Chriſt: And that this Separation is ſo far from being any thing of Schiſm, or culpable Separation, that it is a high and Eminent Duty, that all they that

are growing up to the Stature of the Fulneſs of Chriſt, ſhould be ambitious of; and they need not fear the Unchurching of them, that Chriſt never made Churches.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the Bond of Union in the Church.

1. WE have ſhewed that the Church of Chriſt is of the Nature of a Body-corporate, whether conſidered in its *myſtical* or *viſible State*; and therefore muſt have a Bond of Union, there being no body Phyſical or Politick, but hath ſome peculiar Bond that unites all the parts, whether ſimular or diſſimular, into one Body; the *Integrum* or whole being made up of all parts, brought into mutual conjunction and communion by the ſaid common *Nexus*, which is the Principle of the Life, Office, Motion,

Motion, and Action of each part in its due Reſpect to the whole.

2. The Church of Chriſt coming under this twofold conſideration of Catholick and Viſible, in particular Congregations and Polities, we muſt look upon the Bond or *Nexus* to be agreeable to each conſideration, the Spirit of God having ſo adjuſted it.

3. Hence the *Spirit of Chriſt* is the real true fundamental and indiſſoluble Bond of Union, in this Catholick Body, between Chriſt and his Church, and every part and member thereof in Heaven and in Earth, in all Ages and Nations of the World; ſo that this, whether viſible or inviſible, is all but one Body: though as for the viſible part, in all Ages attended with various Manifeſtations, Diſpenſations, and Regiments, according as Chriſt in his infinite Wiſdom was pleaſed to carry on, and reveal the

Glory

Glory of his Goſpel-myſteries in the World.

Three States of the Church for its Oeconomy, hath appeared.

Firſt, In Families, as it continued from the beginning of the world, till the increaſe of *Abrahams* Family into a Nation; and then aroſe by ſome ſteps to a National Typical Church, by Chriſts own conſtitution, furniſhed with a higher Degree of Glory then the former State, and inferiour to what was to follow.

The third and laſt, was of all moſt clear, perfect, and glorious; which was the Goſpel Eſtabliſhment, freed from Vails, Types, Figures, Shadows, both in reſpect of the true Doctrine, leading to Life and Salvation, the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhining forth in his full Brightneſs, no way overſhadowed and in reſpect of Worſhip, and Order of his Houſe,

wherein he excell'd all that *Moſes*, or any before him, could do, in right Ordinances and Statutes, for the managing the Form and Regiment thereof

4. This Bond of Union is purely myſtical, and no more viſible than the Vital or rather Animal Spirits, that vivifies the whole man in uniting the Soul and Body together, whereby every part conjoined is quickned and inabled to Act in its due place and kind; this we ſay is the Spirit of Chriſt, as it will appear from the expreſs words of the Scripture; 1 Cor. 12. 3. *I give you to underſtand, that no man ſpeaking by the Spirit of God, calleth Jeſus accurſed: and that no man can ſay Jeſus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt.*

Verſe 4. *Now there be diverſities of Gifts, but the ſame Spirit.*

Verſe 5. *And there are differences of Adminiſtrations* under the O[ld] and

and New Teſtament, *but the ſame Lord,* and Head of the Church; therefore the ſame Church Eſſential.

Verſe 6. *There are Diverſities of Operations*; [as in diſtinct Members, which operate according to their particular Forms and Meaſures] *but it is the ſame God that worketh all in all*, i. e. God by the ſame Spirit. Verſe 7. *To another Faith by the ſame Spirit* [to be underſtood of Faith of Miracles, or more then ordinary meaſures of Saving Faith, exerting it ſelf in an eminent manner, as *Abrahams* did, in particular trying caſes.] *To another the gift of healing by the ſame Spirit*; [he goes on to enumerate not only the extraordinary, but ordinary gifts and graces of the Spirit; thoſe given forth in the Primitive Times, and thoſe that are ſince continued, and ſaith verſ. 11. *All theſe worketh that one and the*

ſelf ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he will; and then he goes on to tell us that the Spirit doth not only diffuſe it ſelf throughout, and influence all the Members, from the Head with every Gift and Grace, but that it ties all the Members together, to Chriſt the Head, and one to another; verſ. 12. *For as the Body* [i. e the Natural Body] *is one, and hath many Members, and all the Members of that one Body, being many, are one Body*, [i. e. Myſtical] verſ. 13. *For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles* [the Jews before Chriſts coming were baptized ſpiritually into this Myſtical Body] *whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit* [i. e. all partakers of the operations and influences of one Spirit, in Regeneration and Juſtification.] Now having ſhewed that the Spirit unites the

the many Members into one Body, and is the common *Nexus*, he goes on to ſhew from whence the diverſity of parts, in form, ſhape, uſe and office doth ariſe, and the harmony and agreement; yea the neceſſity of this variety in kinds and degrees for the good of the whole, verſ. 14. *For the Body is not one Member but many, &c.* and verſ. 24. *God hath tempered the Body together* [*viz.* with this diverſity of Gifts, of Parts, of Knowledg] For what end? To make a Schiſm? No, but that the *deficient parts ſhould have the more honour, verſe* 24. and not be trampled upon, abuſed and expoſed to ſhame; and verſe 25. *That there ſhould be no Schiſm in the Body*, but that the Members ſhould have the ſame care one of another, yea a ſympathy and fellow-feeling ſhould be eſtabliſhed among all Parts, verſe 26. much leſs any hatred, deteſta-

tion

tion and enmity betwixt them.

We argue then, That which works all Gifts and Graces, and knits together all the Members, diverſifyes all the Parts, and brings them into an harmonious office and agreement for the good of the whole Myſtical Body of Chriſt under the Old and New Teſtament, is the Bond of Union of that Body; but it appears the Spirit of Chriſt doth this; *Ergo* it's the Catholick Bond. I might mention many other places, I'll only name two or three more.

Eph. 4. 1. The Apoſtle exhorts *to walk worthy of their vocation*, and mentioning many Chriſtian Graces; he tells them in the exerciſe of them, *they ſhould keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace* [ἑνότητα τοῦ πνεύματος]: this Unity, notwithſtanding all diverſities is the groundwork of all Uniformity among Chriſtians] *There is one Body, one Spirit,*

Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, &c. and remarkable is *Epheſ.*2. from the 13th verſe to the end, where he tells us, that Chriſt *having aboliſhed in his Fleſh all enmity* [between God and us, and between Jews and Gentiles] *thoſe that were a far off, are made nigh; he hath made in himſelf* [being the common Head] *of twain* [i. e. Jew and Gentile] *one new man* [i. e. Chriſt Myſtical] *ſo making Peace, &c.* ſee verſe 17. and ver. 18. *For through him we both* [Jews and Gentiles] *have acceſs by one Spirit unto the Father*; and then he goes on to tell them, that *they are no more Strangers, &c.* but made a Spiritual Building upon the beſt Foundation, *fitly framed together, growing up into an holy Temple in the Lord, in whom alſo ye are builded together* [i. e. the whole Catholick Body] *for a habitation of God through the Spirit*, which is

the

the great Cement of this Spiritual Building that unites all the parts together, and every particular part to the Head.

5. The eminent uniting Graces which are wrought by the Spirit, is Faith and Love; Faith to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and Love to one another. Love indeed is the moſt extenſive Union-Grace, becauſe it reacheth the whole Myſtical Body, both the Church Militant and Triumphant; Faith is an Eminent Grace of unſpeakable uſe to Saints, but it's only for their Militant State, 1 *Cor.* 13. But by Love both Saints Militant and Triumphant *dwell in God, and God in them*; 1 John 4. 7, 16. *And hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us*; *becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*, verſe 13. But whilſt we are here, Faith muſt be *primum movens*, as to our Love; we muſt ſee him ſome way or other that we love; nay,

nay, we muſt be made nigh, reconciled in our minds, and embrace him; and this cloſing, yea, firſt taſting of Chriſt, is by Faith; hence the Goſpel Miniſtry and Miniſtration, Eph. 4. 12. *is for the building up the Body of Chriſt* further and further, till all that do belong to him do come, *verſe* 13. εἰς ἑνότητα τῆς πίστεως, to the one-neſs of Faith, or full agreement in the Faith of Jeſus, *to the knowledge of the Son of God* [the Head] *to a perfect man*, [i. e. to make up the perfection of the Myſtical Manhood of Chriſt, as *Paul* ſpeaks elſewhere *of filling up in his Body the Sufferings of Chriſt that remain*; the calling in the Elect, is the perfecting the Myſtical Body of Chriſt] *that henceforth ye be no more Children, &c.* But *ſpeaking the Truth in love*; [ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, truthing it away in love, or walking ſincerely in love] *doth grow up towards him, or upon him,*

him in all things, who is the Head even Chriſt; verſe 16. *From whom* [*i. e.* from the indwelling of whoſe Spirit] *the whole Body is fitly articulated, conjoyned and compacted together* [ſo the words ſignify] *by the ſupply of every Member* [receiving of the diſtributions of the Spirit for the particular Shape, Uſe, Dignity and Office of each part determined] *according to the effectual working*, κατ' ἐνέργειαν, according to the Energy or in-operation (*viz.* of the Spirit) in every part. We have alſo here ἐπιχορηγία, and the ſame word *Philip.* 1. 19. *This ſhall turn to my Salvation*, διὰ ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος, by the influence or ſupply of the Spirit, this influential ſupply is the cauſe of that excellency and beauty that appears in every part for the good of the whole.

6. Having proved the Spirit of Chriſt to be the common *Nexus* or Bond of Union in the Myſtical Body,

dy, or Catholick Church; it is not hard to evince a bond of Union alſo in every particular Church: As the *totum* contains all the parts, and the parts make up the whole; So the Catholick Church contains all particular Churches, and the ſame Bond that tyes the whole together, tyes and limits each part; but as the Catholick Church is yet Myſtical, and not Viſible; becauſe its Bond of Union is ſuch; ſo when ever any part of this Church becomes viſible, there muſt be a manifeſtation and diſcovery as much (as is poſſible) of this Bond of the Spirit, working by Faith and Love.

7. For conveniency of edification, Chriſt hath inſtituted ſeveral Congregations or Apartments in his Church, with a power of chooſing their own Officers, and enjoyment of all Ordinances according to Chriſts Will and Appointment.

Theſe

Theſe particular Congregations muſt each of them, as they are parts of the Catholick, have a manifeſtation of the Bond of the Spirit uniting them to Chriſt and to his Body; which manifeſtation, is the viſible form of a particular Church, and Church Membership.

8. This manifeſtation, if it proceed ſo far as to be a Bond of Union in a particular Spiritual Body Politick; it muſt be, firſt, A probable Profeſſion of this inward Bond of the Spirit working by Faith and Love, that the perſon or perſons ſo profeſſing may rationally, according to the Rules of Charity be eſteemed of the number of the Faithful; which Profeſſing Faithful Ones are the only matter of a Particular Church of Chriſt; this is doing as Chriſtians, in the ſame manner as *Paul* did as a Miniſter, 2 *Cor.* 4. 2, *Renouncing the hidden things*

things of darkneſs, &c. by manifeſtation of the Truth commending our ſelves to every mans Conſcience, in the ſight of God; but of this before, *viz.* That the true matter of a Particular Viſible Church, is viſible Saints. 2. There muſt be ſomething or other to determine a man a Member of this or that Congregation, more then another; all men that ſpeak of Churches, ſay ſo: As ſome ſay Baptiſm, ſome ſay Cohabitation, and that Baptiſm only unites him to the Catholick Church, but Cohabitation determines him to this or that particular. But we ſay it muſt be a voluntary and free ſubmiſſion of a mans ſelf to this or that Society of Chriſts Flock, and the Diſcipline thereof, that can give him, or be to him the form of Viſible Church Memberſhip; it's not rational or natural, that any man ſhould be a Member, or be capa-

ble to claim the priviledges of any Society in the world, of what nature ſoever it be, without his conſent. It's therefore a free voluntary conſent and agreement, which is the true and proper external form of a particular Church, or Church-Membership. Profeſſion is a viſible qualification of the matter, but it's conſent and agreement which is the *Copula* or *Nexus*.

For I challenge any man to give me one inſtance where Chriſt or his Apoſtles ever attempted to force any man to hear the Word, much leſs to believe it when they heard it, or to be of this or that Church. Beſides, it's a natural freedom to every man to chooſe what Government he will put himſelf under, as to his temporal Concerns; though when he hath done it, he be bound by the Laws thereof: much more a Chriſtian Liberty in reſpect of Spiritual Re-

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giment. 3. God desires nor accepts of any forced Service, but requires the greatest freedom and voluntary resignation of themselves in this kind. 4. I shall make it evident, that all the Primitive Churches were so gathered: For the Apostles had no external force in any place of the Earth; *it was not by power or might*, i. e. humane, *but by the Spirit of God*; which wrought with the Word Preached, whereby their hearts were brought with freeness to embrace it, and with boldness to profess and practice it in the midst of all opposition, and accordingly with the greatest chearfulness and alacrity to consent to a subjection to Christ, and all his Precepts and Institutions in his Church. See in the first most Apostolical Church, the 120 that Christ left together at his Ascention, Acts 1. 14. *And all these continued* ὁμοθυμαδὸν &c. *with one*

consent, unanimously in Prayer, &c. *Chap.* 2. 41. *And as many as received the Word* ἀσμένως *chearfully* or *gladly*, yielded and submitted to the Truth Preached and advised by *Peter*, *these were baptized and added to the Church by the Apostles Doctrine, and in Fellowship*; which they would not have done, if they had not freely and upon choice and profession embraced it. The first Church of the Gentiles that was gathered, was at *Antioch*. See how they came to be a Church, Acts 11. 19, 20. *And they that were scattered upon the Persecution that arose about* Steven, *Travelled so far as* Phenice, &c. verse 20. *And some of them were men of* Cyprus *and* Cyrene, *which when they were come to* Antioch, *spake unto the* Grecians, *Preaching the Lord Jesus*, verse 21. *And the hand of the Lord was with them*; [The Spirit and Power of Christ] *and a great number beleived* [i. e. freely

freely embraced the Truth] *and turned unto the Lord.* Now when *Barnabas* was ſent from *Jeruſalem* to aid and encourage this great work, verſe 23. *When he came and had ſeen the Grace of God, he was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpoſe of heart they would cleave unto the Lord*; that is, that they would freely, voluntarily and ſincerely, without any hypocriſy, ſubmit themſelves to Chriſt and his Ordinances, with manifeſtation of the fulleſt aſſent, and freeſt conſent that might be; now you find, verſ. 26. that they were immediately a Church upon this cleaving to the Lord, with whom *Paul* and *Barnabas* aſſembled, Preaching unto much people that attended their Miniſtry beſides, which were not yet of that gathered Church. I need not enlarge on this Point any further, the aſſertion being not only moſt agreeable to the beſt reaſon, but

it being ſo clear, that this was the only way of Gathering Churches, uſed by the Apoſtles, and all their Coadjutors in the times of the Primitive Purity: If any hath practiced otherwiſe ſince, we are not obliged to be of their minds, or follow their examples; Corruptions of the Church proceeding from Antichriſt, and not from Chriſt.

This is the day wherein the Lord is *waſhing away the Filth of the Daughters of* Zion [The Churches of Chriſt] *and is purging away the Blood* [The Antichriſtian Pollutions of Worſhip] *of Jeruſalem, from the midſt of her, by the Spirit of Judgment, and Spirit of burning, Iſa.* 4. 4.

And all the ſeven women that have laid hold on the Skirt of Chriſt, and called themſelves by his

his name, ſhall appear to be Harlots; yea, as for thee O *Aholibah*, thus ſaith the Lord, *Thou haſt walked in the way of thy Siſter, therefore I will give her Cup into thy hand; thou ſhalt drink of thy Siſters Cup deep and large, thou ſhalt be laughed to ſcorn, and had in deriſion*, Ezek. 23. 31, 32. It containeth much.

CHAP. X.

Of Church-Communion.

1. UNion according to its Nature, Phyſical or Politick, or Oecumenical, naturally produceth a Communion ſuitable thereto; that which we are about to ſpeak of, is of a Spiritual, at leaſt of an Eccleſiaſtical Nature; we have ſhewn what is the primary Bond of Union in the Church of Chriſt, that it is the Spirit of Chriſt that animates, knits and tyes his whole Body together, and that this is Myſtical: But exerting it ſelf in vital motions and operations in all the Members, it produceth a ſecond Bond, proper and neceſſary to the eſtabliſhment of a particular Viſible Church, which is a manifeſtation

tion of this Spirit in a credible Profeſſion, and free conſent to the Regiment and Ordinances of Chriſt, with a reſignation of our ſelves thereto; and this becomes the Bond of Church-Fellowſhip, and the Foundation of an orderly Communion.

Communion is participation in one common benefit, or its mutual Participation or Communication of good things by various ſubjects.

So Spiritual Communion is firſt a common participation in one general good or benefit of a Spiritual Nature; and here where all the Members of Chriſt's Body partake of the ſame Head, the ſame Spirit, as their Unity conſiſts in reſpect of connexion of Parts, ſo their Communion conſiſts in it in reſpect of Participation; and this *is the Communion of the Holy Ghoſt*, 2 Cor. 13. 14. Its fully expreſſed as a Myſtical Communion, 1 *John* 1. 3. *That*

3. *That which we have ſeen and heard, declare we unto you, that you may have Fellowſhip with us; and truly our Fellowſhip is with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt*; This Communion in the Spirit is ſet forth unto us at large in that forementioned place, 1 *Cor.* 12. 4, 5, 6, 7, *&c.* where he ſhews, that all the Graces, Gifts, Members, Operations, Offices in the Body, according to their ſeveral diverſifications, flow from the ſame Spirit, all the ſtreams take indifferently from the ſame Fountain.

This Communion in the Holy Ghoſt runs through the whole Catholick Church in all Ages and Countries; for where the common Bond of Union is, this Communion muſt be.

3. To make Communion in the Body compleat, there muſt not only be this Participation in a common good by all the Members, but

but a Communication of all good to each other mutually, as they are capable, and fellow-feeling with each other in all Sufferings.

The Spirit of Christ thus influencing all the Members, appears and manifests it self in Graces and Gifts, variously working towards this mutual fellowship of Parts, both in good and evil of each other, which are called the Operations of the Spirit; as for Graces, the Principal wherein the Catholick Communion doth consist, are Faith and Love; and by these they Communicate with Christ the Head, receiving from him, and making return to him, as it were in a reciprocation, as also a mutual communication to, and with each other; for Faith is the leading Grace of Communion for our present state, by it we receive of the fulness of Christ for Justification and Sanctification, *John* 1. and by Faith

the

the Saints have communion one with another; for as it is the foundation of the love of God in the heart, ſo it is of our love to our Brethren, believing them to be Juſtified in Chriſt Jeſus, and Members of his Body: for Love founded on the Faith of the good eſtate of another, is properly Charity; the credibility of anothers Profeſſion, gives ground of Faith, that he is what he profeſſeth; and this joyned with Love, makes Charity; wherefore the Apoſtle takes it in this ſence, when he ſaith, *Philemon* 5. *Hearing of thy Love and Faith which thou haſt toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and all Saints*: Moreover by Faith the Saints viſible have a kind of Communion, with thoſe that went before, and who are to come after; it being the ſubſtance of things [or perſons in futurition] hoped for, and the evidence [or demonſtration of the

the Truth] of things not ſeen, [*i. e.* removed from ſence, by time parterition, or place in abſence;] ſo thereby we ſee the Saints and thoſe Truths atteſted by them in Ages paſt.

4. As for Love, it's not only the moſt eminent Grace of actual communion between Chriſt and his Members, and of them with each other in the ſtate that we are in here; but it's almoſt the only remaining when we go hence, 1 *Cor.* 13. 13. *John* treats much of the tranſcendent excellency of this Grace throughout his Epiſtle, *&c.* 1 *John* 4. 11. *If God ſo loved us, we ought to love one another,* 12. *If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is made perfect in us:* by this Grace we have communion with all Saints Militant and Triumphant, 1 *John* 5. 1. *Every one that loveth him that is begot, loveth him that is begotten of him.*

5. Now

1 5. Now by Communion in theſe two Graces, the Church grows up to its full perfection; the Apoſtle ſaying, *Epheſ.* 4. 12. *That the Miniſtry and Miniſtration is for the Building up of the Body of Chriſt,* ἑνότητα πίστεως [agreement in all points of Faith, and Profeſſion of it] *and to the knowledge of the Son of God,* [the Head] *to the perfect man, to the meaſure of the Stature of the fullneſs of Chriſt* [Myſtical] filling up his Body, and receiving influentially of his Fulneſs by Faith, and v. 15. ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, do grow more and more ſincere in Love; this Love ſhews it ſelf in its fellow-feeling, alſo that it works in us, whereby we communicate in each others Sufferings, and ſupply each others wants, for the good of the whole; this part of Communion is fully diſcourſed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13, 14, *&c.* yea in the moſt part of the Chapter.

6. Thus

6. Thus far Communion belongs to the Church under its Catholick conſideration in its Myſtical State; there muſt be ſome external actions and things that are viſible, whereby the Communion of theſe Graces muſt be manifeſt, in Miniſtry, Offices, Gifts, Ordinances, but all for and from the Spirit, and theſe eminent Graces of Faith and Love.

7. Communion then of particular Congregations muſt be by Chriſt's Ordination viſible in thoſe ſacred Means and Ordinances appointed by Chriſt for its growth, confirmation, and building up in Grace and Truth. God having made his Church in its viſible ſtate, the Nurſery of Grace, and the Knowledge of the Truth, *Eph.* 4. 12. *For the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying the Body of Chriſt,* [*i. e.* in the militanting viſible part] 13. *till we all come in the Unity of the Faith*

Faith, and the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the ſtature of the fullneſs of Chriſt. Verſe 14. *That we ſhould be henceforth no more Children.*

8. The Edification of the Church being appointed by Chriſt in a way of Communion; we are to conſider, 1. wherein this viſible communion doth conſiſt; 2. what is the ground and end of it: 3. where, and between whom it is. 1. Wherein doth it conſiſt? It doth conſiſt, firſt in participation of ſome common benefit and advantages, which a particular Congregation are capable of, and have frequent fellowſhip together in, and theſe are Church-Gifts and Church-Ordinances, *Acts* 2. 42. *They continued ſtedfaſt in the Apoſtles Doctrine and Fellowſhip, in Breaking Bread and in Prayers*; and for this end hath *Chriſt* furniſhed his Church with Miniſtry

Miniſtry and Ordinances, *Eph. ſ.* 4. Miniſtry by erecting extraordinary and ordinary for the planting of his Church; our Saviour thought meet to ſend them with extraordinary Commiſſion and qualifications thoſe that were ſuch, were eſpecially *Apoſtles, Prophets,* & *Evangeliſts*, 1 Cor. 12. 28. *First Apoſtles, ſecondarily Prophets*, Eph. 4. 11. Theſe were all to be Witneſſes of the Reſurrection and Aſcenſion of our Lord Jeſus, and confirm their Doctrine by Miracles, had their inſpiration of the Holy Ghoſt, ſpecial Preſence of God, and power in the Churches wherever they came, eſpecially the Apoſtles.

9. The Apoſtles were XII, which waited upon our Lord during his Miniſtry on earth, before his Sufferings; *Judas* then falling from his Miniſtry, when our Lord Aſcended he left eleven, to which *Matthias* was added by Lot, and E-

lection of the Church, *Act.* 1. to these two more were added afterwards, by special command of the Holy Ghost to the Prophets in the Church at *Antioch*, Act. 13. 1, 2, 3 compared with *chap.* 14. 14. *Which when the Apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of*; and before that Ordination, *Barnabas* was but a Prophet, sent from the Church at *Jerusalem* to assist them that were there before; as appears *chap.* 11. 22, 23. and *chap.* 13. 1.

10. The Prophets, I apprehend to be such, who were furnished with Gifts and Graces, and extraordinary inspiration; their Call and Commission being such, for the calling of the Gentiles, and gathering the Churches: And I suppose them to be those Brethren of the 120 that waited together at *Jerusalem*, till they were baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire, being all equally with the Apostles furnished with

the gift of Tongues (though ſecondary to them in their power) for the diſpenſing the Goſpel to all Nations, and therefore upon the ſcattering the Church of *Jeruſalem* after *Stephens* Perſecution; theſe Prophets moſtly began the Churches of the Gentiles by their Miniſtry at firſt: My Reaſons for it are, 1. That its evident all the Brethren as well as the Apoſtles were extraordinarily furniſhed for the Miniſtry, Act. 2. 4. *They were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and began to ſpeak with other tongues, &c.* Now this was for ſpecial ends, that they were capacitated to ſpeak to all Nations in their own Languages.

2. We find upon *Stevens Perſecution, Act.* 8. 1. that they were all ſcattered, except the Apoſtles; not the whole Church, for we read often of that Church ſtill, but all the Brethren of the 120 were ſcattered throughout the Regions of *Judea* & *Samaria*, by whoſe means Churches

of the *Jews* were gathered, as it appears, verſe 14. and *Acts* 9.31. After God had taken off that great Informer *Saul*, then had all the Churches *reſt throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria.* Likewiſe we find that the Church of *Antioch*, the firſt among the *Gentiles* that we read of, was Planted by their Miniſtry; ſee *Acts* 11. 19, 20, 22. compare with *ch.* 13. 1. More might be ſaid on this point but *I* muſt keep to the preſent deſign, only naming the ſeveral Offices.

11 The third kind of extraordidary Officers, were *Evangeliſts*, ſuch as *Steven, Philip, Luke, Mark, Timothy, &c.* they were men no doubt extraordinarily qualified, and were called Evangeliſts, as being Aſſiſtants to the Apoſtles, and travelled with them, and ſometimes alone, as *Philip*: It may be doubted whether the ſeven Deacons were of that 120 Brethren, for they were

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men full of the Holy Ghoſt, *ch.* 6. 3. and afterward being pitched upon for eminent Service to the *Church*, were called now Evangeliſts; but being not of the number that were together at our Saviours Aſcention and Pentecoſt, and though their work might be the ſame with the Prophets, yet their dignity was inferiour to the Apoſtles and Prophets, as *Eph.* 4. *Some Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts*; but we need not lay much ſtreſs now upon the differences of thoſe Offices ceaſed; thoſe Officers, eſpecially Apoſtles and Prophets, are irrecoverably ceaſed from the very nature of them; for an Apoſtle, it were requiſite to be one who had ſeen the Lord, and a Prophet (according to what we endeavour to prove) one of thoſe that *were baptized with the Ghoſt and Fire at Pentecoſt.* As for an Evangeliſt, it's moſt probable to remain, if any, becauſe the

work ſtill remains neceſſary to the encreaſe of the Church, *viz.* Preaching to Unconverted people, and gathering of Churches; tho' none can be expected ſince the Primitive Times with any more then ordinary qualifications which any ſtated Church-officer hath, ſuch Evangeliſts & ſuch Deacons cannot be had: But to ſupply thoſe Offices neceſſary now in the Church, thoſe that are to be mentioned are ſufficient.

12. The Ordinary Officers remaining in the Church now, may be reduced to theſe two heads, *Elders and Deacons*; Elders, for Miniſtry and Government; Deacons, to ſerve Tables, to look after the neceſſary charges for the Miniſtry, Ordinances, Aſſemblies, Poor, *&c.* I ſhall not enlarge here, it being evident to every one acquainted with Scripture.

13. The Ordinances of Ordinary Communion, are Prayer, Preaching

ing the Word, Sacraments, *Acts* 2. Collections. The Lords Supper is ſtill ſpoken of as the moſt eminent Ordinance of Communion, 1 *Cor.* 10. 16.

14. If we enquire for the ground and end of Communion in theſe Ordinances, it is, That this is the way appointed by Chriſt for the edifying his Body, for the encreaſe of Faith and Love in the Members of Chriſt; thoſe Ordinances being deſigned indeed, as to the Church, for edification; for its not to be ſuppoſed that a Church-Member ſhould be an unconverted perſon; if a hypocrite creep in, he hath nothing of true end and deſign of Communion. So that by Communion the Body of Chriſt is nouriſhed, ſtrengthened and perfected, towards *its fullneſs of ſtature in Chriſt.*

15. If it be enquired where Church Communion is, and between what kind of perſons? I anſwer, Church-Communion in Or-

nances, can be but in one particular Congregation, at the ſame time, where all may meet for edification in one place, & we read of no other in the Primitive Church; tho ſome would have that of *Jeruſalem* to be greater then ſo, after the addition of 3000; but its expreſly ſaid, that they *were all together in Fellowſhip*, and met together ſtill before the diſperſion, *Acts* 2. 42.44. alſo *chap.* 5. 12. and other places; but this great Church was ſcattered afterwards by Gods Providence, ordering it for the great advantage of the Goſpel, and propagation of Churches.

16. If it be inquired between whom Church-Communion is exerciſed? The anſwer is eaſy, It's between particular Members, that ordinarily have fellowſhip in the ſame particular Congregations; as likewiſe between one particular Church and another, all Churches communicating

comunicating in this, that they are of the ſame univerſal Body, have the ſame Head, Bond of Union, Graces, Ordinances, Priviledges, as in the one intire Catholick Body; as every individual perſon in fellowſhip is a Member in particular, ſo every individual Church is a part of that *Integrum* compacted by that vvhich every joynt ſupplyeth, according to the effectual working in the meaſure of every part, *&c.* *Epheſ.* 4. 16.

17. Communion we have ſaid, as it ſtands in copartnerſhip in ſome common good, ſo in communication between Member and Member; what of peculiar good is in any part, is communicable to the reſt, or fellow-feeling of the Sufferings of each other. As there is a common deſign carri'd on by every part for the good of the whole, ſo by all parts for each other: The Apoſtle tells us this at large, 1*Cor.* 12. *Eph.* 4.

18. The

18. The mutual communication that is visible in order to spiritual advantage, stands in giving and receiving by the exercise of spiritual gifts and graces in the Word and Prayer, by mutual advice and counsel, by admonition and Church-censures, where required; by contributions to the wants and necessities of each other any way arising, *Spiritual or Temporal.* This Communion is practicable between *Church* and Church also, not only by occasional participation in the Word and Ordinances with each other, but in the matters before mentioned of advice and supply of each others wants: In the former case, we have the example of the Church of *Antioch*, advising with the Church of *Jerusalem*; in the latter, that 1 *Cor.* 16. 5. 2 *Cor.* 9. 3, 4. *Gal.* 6. 6. *&c.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The Concluſion.

BEing not minded to enlarge this diſcourſe any further at this time, I ſhall only lay down a few Corolary Aſſertions briefly to obviate ſome objections that may riſe in ſome mens minds againſt what hath been ſpoken, which we ſhall be ready to defend, if occaſion requires.

1. That that only is a true conſtituted Church of Chriſt, which is a houſe of Gods Building; it's not mans fancy or pretentions, that renders any thing ſo.

2. That a Chriſtians actual Communion with any one true Viſible Church

Church of Christ, makes him a Member in Communion with all the Churches of Christ; though he doth not at present, nor hath occasion to communicate with any Congregated Body, besides what he is actually and immediately in Communion with.

3. Hence barely Non-Communion as to immediate Participation in Ordinances with this or that Church, doth not Unchurch them, (as some men phrase it) *i. e.* condemn their standing, neither is it any part of Schism or culpable Separation.

4. There is a Separation that is absolutely necessary to every True Visible Church of Christ, there can be none without it, and it is the duty of True Churches and Members to practice it.

5. This Separation is from the World, Flesh and Devil, and therefore from all the children of these,

and

and from all falſe Churches whatſoever.

6. That all Antichriſtian Churches, as well as abſolutely Heathen, are Idol-temples, and therefore Communion with them is fellowſhip with *Belial* and his Idols, 1 *Cor.* 6.

7. That Chriſt hath had his true Worſhippers and Churches during the whole time of the Antichriſtian Reign and Rage, but in a Wilderneſs, eſpecially as to Viſible Form and Conſtitution; yea trodden down by the Gentiles for the moſt part; preſerved notwithſtanding by Chriſt in ſome times and places in its eſſential myſtical ſtate, at leaſt without any viſible luſtre in Externals, as the Church of Old in *Egypt* and *Babylon*; in other times and places he hath ſecured them in ſome retirements, ſo far as to have opportunity to erect *Tabernacles* of true Goſpel-conſtitutions in form

form and faſhion as he primitively appointed.

8. And thus the true Churches of Chriſt hath ſtood during the time of the Womans militating in the Wilderneſs, under its ſeveral Scatterings, Deformations and Reformations, under which God hath owned them all the dayes of their wanderings in the Wilderneſs.

9. God hath had his degrees of Reformation and Purity of his Church, eſpecially during the laſt part of the Beaſts Reign, and that all ſuch degrees have been progreſſes in Separation, as to Purity of Ordinances and Worſhip, till at laſt there ſhall be a perfect full and clear Redemption of *Zion* from all her Captivity in this Spiritual *Egypt and Babylon.*

10. Schiſm is a thing talked more of then underſtood; we only affirm this concerning it, 1. That Separation from a manifeſtly falſe Church

Church is no Schiſm. 2. Non-communion with a ſuſpected Church, is no Schiſm, but a duty. 3. That all Schiſm ſpoken of in Scripture, is actually and immediately in ſome particular Congregation, being a Viſible Politick Body; and thoſe there mentioned are not all amputations, or rentings aſunder; moſt of them are but diviſions in ſome matters of judgment and affection, without a deſtruction of the whole as in the Church of *Corinth*, though there may be ſome tendency thereunto.

11. Manifeſt Corruptions in Worſhip perſiſted in, eſpecially if ſuch as are taken up again, after they have been abundantly witneſſed againſt, and purged out by former degrees of Reformation, are to be ſeparated from, and witneſſed againſt, and ſuch Churches as maintain them: Yea, ſuch Separation is ſo far from a juſt charge

charge of Schism, that it is a necessary Duty of all those whose Minds and Consciences are informed in the truth of the Gospel.

FINIS.